NATION

2 die in Meghalaya firing over polls; Net suspended

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BUSINESS

Sensex and Nifty end nearly 1% higher as crude prices drop

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SPORTS

BCCI rewards T20 winners record Rs 131 crore

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Restore LPG supply to B'luru: CM to Centre

CM tells Oil minister hotels will be forced to shut if LPG is supplied only for domestic use

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday urged the Centre to ensure adequate supply of commercial LPG cylinders to hotels and food establishments in Bengaluru, warning that many could be forced to suspend operations if supplies are not restored quickly.

In a letter to Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Siddaramaiah sought urgent intervention and requested directions to oil marketing companies to address the current supply constraints.

Referring to the 9 March order issued by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas prioritising LPG supply for domestic consumers, he said the move, though well-intentioned, appears to have caused an unintended shortage of commercial LPG in the city.

Several hotel and restaurant associations have reported difficulty in procuring cylinders and warned that establishments may have to temporarily shut down if supplies are not restored soon, he said.

Bengaluru has a large network of small restaurants, mess facilities and catering units that serve lakhs of people daily, including students and working professionals who rely on them for regular meals.

40,000
Bengaluru hotels on verge of shutdown, says Bengaluru hotel association.

Disruption to their operations would directly affect daily life in the city, the chief minister noted. According to Siddaramaiah, discussions with oil marketing companies indicated that Karnataka's commercial LPG demand is typically met through supplies from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (around 500–550 metric tonnes per day), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (about 300 MT per day) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (around 230 MT per day). The sudden disruption of these supplies has severely affected commercial users in the city. He added that choultries, hostels, community halls and event venues dependent on commercial LPG are also facing uncertainty, particularly with scheduled social functions and gatherings. Given the scale of dependence in a metropolitan city like Bengaluru, Siddaramaiah requested the Centre to ensure timely restoration of commercial LPG supplies to avoid inconvenience to thousands of people. —*PTI*

A cook at a Gandhinagar hotel prepares food using firewood amid shortage of LPG cylinders in Bengaluru on Tuesday—*MOHAMMED ASAD*

LPG crisis cripples India; Govt invokes Essential Commodities Act

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

A growing LPG supply crunch triggered by the West Asia conflict began affecting India's hospitality sector on Tuesday, with restaurants warning of possible shutdowns as the government prioritised domestic cooking gas supplies for households.

To stabilise supplies, the Centre invoked the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and revised the allocation of natural gas, giving priority to domestic piped gas, compressed natural gas (CNG) for transport, LPG production and essential pipeline operations. India has around 332 million LPG consumers.

The move follows shortages of commercial LPG cylinders reported in cities including Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai. The oil ministry has constituted a committee of three executive directors from oil marketing companies to review requests from hotels, restaurants and other industries for non-domestic LPG supplies.

India consumes about 31.3 million tonnes of LPG annually, of which nearly 87 per cent is used in households.

Around 62 per cent of the country's requirement is met through imports, much of it routed through the Strait of Hormuz. Disruptions following US-Israel strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliation have affected supplies.

Industry representatives said the shortage has already begun disrupting operations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday reviewed the energy situation with key ministers and directed them to ensure consumers do not suffer. The government has asked refineries to maximise LPG output by diverting propane and butane streams for cooking gas production.

The refill booking cycle has also been extended to 25 days to discourage panic booking and hoarding. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 4, 5 and 7

China to strengthen highways in border regions with India

BEIJING, 10 MARCH

China plans to strengthen its strategic transport network in border regions with India under the 15th Five-Year Plan, beginning this year. Projects include a 394 km highway linking the northern and southern Tianshan Mountains in Xinjiang, running parallel to a road through disputed Aksai Chin to improve military mobility. Construction of the Dushanzi-Kuqa Highway began in September, expected to finish by 2032, while three highways into Tibet will be upgraded. Liu Zongyi, director at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, said, "Infrastructure holds significant strategic and economic value. In the event of an emergency, personnel and resources could be deployed more quickly to frontier regions, which is crucial for border stability and national defence." China aims to complete two highways across all nine land-border provinces and advance its National Coastal Highway. —*PTI*

OIL PRICES DROP AS DON SAYS WAR WILL END

Oil prices fell sharply on Tuesday after US President Donald Trump said the war with Iran would end "very soon", though markets remained volatile.

Global benchmark Brent crude dropped about 9 per cent before trimming losses to trade 7 per cent lower at USD 92 a barrel, while West Texas Intermediate fell 6.8 per cent to around USD 88. Both had traded near USD 73 and USD 67 respectively before US–Israel strikes on Iran on February 28.

Meanwhile, Saudi Aramco warned of "catastrophic consequences" for markets if shipments through the Strait of Hormuz remain disrupted. US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said the conflict would end only after Iran is "totally defeated".

>>>More on Page 6

Govt proposes new airport for Kalyana K'taka

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Infrastructure Development Minister MB Patil on Tuesday announced a proposal to construct an airport at a suitable location in the Kalyana Karnataka region to serve the connectivity needs of Ballari, Vijayanagara and Koppal districts.

A final decision will be taken after a meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and public representatives from the three districts, Patil said while replying to a starred question raised by BJP member YM Satish in the Legislative Council.

Recalling the earlier Ballari airport proposal, Patil said the project dates back to 2010 when about 900 acres of land were acquired and the work was entrusted to Marg Sri Krishnadevaraya Airport Private Limited, Chennai.

"The company failed to commence work within the stipulated two years. Consequently, the agreement was cancelled," he said.

Patil said the government had invited tenders last October to appoint consultants to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the proposed airport.

He noted that residents of Vijayanagara and Koppal districts have also been demanding an airport, prompting the government to explore a location convenient to all three districts. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

It's time for UCC: SC on plea against Shariat law

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Hearing a plea accusing Shariat law of 1937 for the abuse of Muslim women, Supreme Court on Tuesday said that this was a strong reason why the time had come for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

Backing the UCC, A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joymalya Bagchi and R Mahadevan said if the court struck down the Shariat inheritance law, it would create a legal vacuum, as there is no statutory law governing Muslim inheritance.

CJI Kant said, "The answer is Uniform Civil Code." Justice Bagchi pointed out that the rule of 'one wife for one man' is not being uniformly applied to all communities.

"But does that mean that the court can declare all bigamous marriages as unconstitutional? So, we have to defer to legislative power to bring the directive principles into effect," he said.

At the outset, Bhushan submitted that the court can make a declaration that Muslim women are entitled to equal inheritance rights as men, and the provisions of the Indian Succession Act will apply if the court strikes down the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act of 1937. The bench wondered whether the court can at all adjudicate the constitutionality of a personal law practice. Bhushan said in 2017 the apex court struck down triple talaq as an unconstitutional practice.

The bench allowed Bhushan to amend the petition filed by Poulomi Pavini Shukla and others and posted the matter for further hearing after four weeks saying it is an "important issue". —*PTI*

>More on Pg 6

LS takes up resolution to remove Birla

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Lok Sabha took up on Tuesday an opposition resolution seeking the removal of Speaker Om Birla from office for his alleged bias towards the ruling party, amid a heated debate on who will preside over the House while the motion is taken up.

Congress legislator Mohammad Jawed read out the notice seeking to move the resolution to remove Birla from office.

As soon as Jawed read out the notice, AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi questioned the decision to allow Jagdambika Pal to chair the proceedings as he was appointed to the panel of chairpersons by Birla.

BJP's Nishikant Dubey countered the claim, citing constitutional provisions, law and House rules.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Owaisi's claim is irrelevant as Pal is competent to preside over the Lok Sabha.

Trinamool Congress MP Saugata Roy said Rijiju should move a motion to appoint a presiding officer specifically for the purpose.

Rejecting the claims, Pal put the notice to move the resolution to vote and asked at least 50 MPs to stand up in support.

Once the required number of members stood up, the notice was accepted and Jawed read out the resolution.

Gaurav Gogoi, the Congress' Deputy Leader in the Lok Sabha, began the discussion for which 10 hours have been allocated.

Initiating the debate, Gogoi once again raised the question of who should preside over the proceedings when the resolution for the speaker's removal is being discussed. He said the opposition was compelled to bring a resolution for Birla's removal to "save the Constitution." —*PTI*

BJP names candidates for Council polls

- Shashil G Namoshi has been fielded for North East Teachers' constituency, SV Sankanura for West Graduates and KM Suresh for South East Graduates.

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

The BJP on Tuesday announced three candidates for the biennial election to the Karnataka Legislative Council.

Though the Election Commission of India has not announced the election dates, the BJP Central Election Committee in New Delhi announced the names of its candidates.

According to the list, Shashil G Namoshi has been fielded for North East Teachers' constituency, SV Sankanura for West Graduates and KM Suresh for the South East Graduates.

The Congress announced its list for four seats on 31 December, 2025.

According to it, Mohan Limbakai will contest from West Graduates, Shashi Hullikuntemutt for South East Graduates, Sharanappa Mattur for North East Teachers and Puttanna for Bengaluru Teachers constituency. —*PTI*

New Nepal govt wants 'development diplomacy' with India

KATHMANDU, 10 MARCH

Rabi Lamichhane, chief of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), has said he looks forward to strengthening Nepal–India ties through "development diplomacy" after thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for congratulating his party on its electoral success. The RSP, formed in 2022, won 125 of the 165 seats under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system in Nepal's parliamentary elections, putting it in a position to form a majority government. The party has also secured 4,974,957 votes so far under the proportional representation (PR) system.

In a social media post, Lamichhane thanked Modi for recognising the democratic mandate of the Nepali people and said stronger cooperation would help ensure prosperity for citizens of both countries.

Modi congratulated Lamichhane and Balendra Shah on their victory, expressing confidence that India–Nepal relations would scale new heights. Shah is set to become Nepal's first Madhesi prime minister and the youngest elected executive head. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

THE FALLOUT

After Dec crisis, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers resigns; MD Bhatia to takeover

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Pieter Elbers resigned as chief executive officer of IndiGo on Tuesday, citing personal reasons, with the airline relieving him of his duties with immediate effect.

The sudden exit comes three months after the country's largest airline faced massive operational disruptions that led to public outrage and regulatory action. IndiGo's co-founder and managing director Rahul Bhatia will manage the airline's affairs on an interim basis until a new CEO is appointed, the company said.

In a statement, parent firm InterGlobe Aviation said Elbers had requested that his notice period be waived. The Dutch national had been serving as CEO since 6 September, 2022.

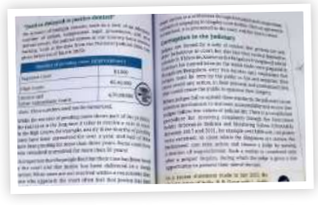
In his resignation letter, Elbers described his tenure as an honour and privilege and said it had been a "beautiful growth story" for the airline. He added that he would be available to assist with the transition if required. The resignation follows major operational disruptions between December 3 and 5 last year, when 2,507 flights were cancelled and 1,852 delayed, affecting more than three lakh passengers nationwide. In January, aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation imposed penalties totalling Rs 22.20 crore on the airline and warned Elbers along with two other senior executives for non-compliance. —*PTI*

Chapter on 'judicial graft': NCERT withdraws book

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) on Tuesday issued a public apology for including a chapter on judicial corruption in a Class 8 social science textbook and announced that the entire book has been withdrawn.

The textbook had stated that corruption, a massive backlog of cases and an inadequate number of judges were among the challenges faced by the judicial system. In a statement, NCERT said it had recently published the social science textbook Exploring Society: India and Beyond for Grade 8 (Part 2), which included Chapter 4 titled "The Role of Judiciary in our Society". The



controversy reached the Supreme Court of India after a three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi took suo motu cognisance of the matter. The issue was mentioned for urgent hearing by senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Singhvi.

Expressing strong objection, the Chief Justice said no one would be allowed to defame the judiciary. —*PTI*

War reaches B'luru kitchens, hotels hit

Hotels say they will operate till last drop of gas is used as threat of shutdown looms

The supply of commercial LPG cyinders has been cut abruptly due to the war in West Asia —MOHAMMED ASAD

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Several hotels and restaurants in the city on Tuesday continued to operate under strain with the commercial gas cylinders already they have and said they will be forced to shut down once the stock is exhausted.

PC Rao, Honorary President of the Bangalore Hotels Association, said on Tuesday that the decision of closure depends on individual hotels. They will operate as long as they have gas, he said. "Till the last drop of gas available, we will cook and serve," he said.

The development comes following a sudden and total halt in the supply of commercial gas cylinders, amid the rising energy costs and supply constraints caused by the West Asia conflict, according to the Bangalore Hotels Association.

"Since the gas supply has stopped, the hotels will be closed from 10 March," the association had said in a release earlier.

When asked if there would be a complete shutdown of hotels and restaurants today, Rao said, "No, no. Some people (hotels) still have stock. Some others are waiting, hoping there might be some supply. It is not possible to arrange any alternative immediately."

Hotelier Chandrashekhar Hebbar said the situation has become serious.

"For now, everyone is trying to manage by reducing gas consumption and adjusting things, but that can be done only for a day or two," Hebbar said. He said several items were already being curtailed to conserve gas. "We have stopped serving some items. Things like poori have been controlled".

Hebbar cautioned that the closure of hotels would affect not only customers but also workers and catering services.

"We have a lot of catering work also, especially with many weddings happening now. All the orders have already been taken, and there is no alternative at present," he said.

Similarly, Santosh Malnad, Director of the Hotel Owners Association said: "We are forcing the Central government to bring the hotels under the Essential Commodities section. The government has ordered the oil companies to give commercial cylinders to health, agriculture, and education. How can hotel industry survive without cylinders?"

"They should ensure the free flow of cylinders to hotel industry," he said. —*Agencies*

DKS SLAMS BJP OVER LPG SHORTAGE; BOMMAI CALLS IT TEMPORARY

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday said the shortage of LPG refills has become a serious concern in the State and slammed the BJP for not speaking about it despite its impact on businesses such as hotels and catering establishments. Union Minister Basavaraj Bommai, meanwhile, said that energy remained a priority for the Centre.

Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivanagar residence in the City, Shivakumar said the issue must be discussed in Parliament.

"They (BJP) are eager to raise all kinds of weird issues, let them talk on this too," he said. "Because of the gas price hike and the gas shortage, people are going on strike, but the BJP MPs are not talking about it."

However, Bommai said that petrol and diesel supply remains stable and lashed out at the Opposition for "politicising everything" instead of thinking about the nation.

"LPG supply from Gulf countries has faced a temporary disruption, but it is expected to resume by next week," the former CM stated in Delhi.

"Iran has granted passage to three ships carrying our country's oil, reflecting the goodwill and strong diplomatic efforts of the PM Modi government," he said. —*Agencies*

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during the Budget Session at Vidhana Soudha on Tuesday —MOHAMMED ASAD

Bagalkot boy stabs friend to death over Holi dispute

BAGALKOT, 10 MARCH

A 19-year-old youth identified as Rahul was allegedly stabbed to death by a 16-year-old minor in Bagalkot district on Monday near Siddeshwara Temple in Teradal following a dispute that occurred during Holi celebrations. The accused minor and Rahul were known to each other, police said. An argument had reportedly broken out between them during Holi celebrations. The minor later allegedly boasted to friends that he had assaulted Rahul, which angered the victim who called the minor to the temple premises to discuss the issue. During the conversation, the two got into a heated argument that soon escalated into a physical scuffle where the minor stabbed Rahul. The boy was taken into custody. —*SALAR NEWS*

3 held for tying, robbing bizman, wife in City home

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Three men were arrested for allegedly robbing gold jewellery and cash worth lakhs from the house of a real estate businessman after posing as policemen, police said. The accused entered the residence in BEL Layout on the pretext of checking CCTV footage linked to a case. They allegedly threatened the businessman and his wife with a knife, tied their hands and legs, and fled with gold, cash and mobile phones. Byadarahalli Police traced the suspects. Officers recovered 429 grams of gold and Rs 10 lakh in cash totally worth about Rs 52.9 lakh. One accused had recently been released on parole from Hindalga Central Jail. —*PTI*

State nurses can now register through Digilocker

BENGLAURU, 10 MARCH

Nurses registered with the Karnataka State Nursing Council can now renew their registration online from anywhere in India through the DigiLocker linked with Aadhaar, eliminating the need to visit the council office in Gandhinagar.

Earlier, nurses trained in Karnataka had to physically visit the office every five years for renewal. Medical Education Minister Sharanprakash R Patil inaugurated the digitised renewal system at Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, stating the move would make the process easier, especially for women professionals and nurses working outside the state. —*SALAR NEWS*

Kolar lyricist wins 'India Book of Records'

KOLAR, 10 MARCH

Budding lyricist and composer, Duggaraj Shreyas AP of Kolar, has been honoured with the 'India Book of Records; award. He composed 'Om Namo Narasimha', a devotional song dedicated to Narasimhaswamy. The song was composed and performed in English and was featured in over 70 print and online newspapers across India. The song, which has garnered 2 million views on Bhakti Sagar's YouTube channel making Narasimha devotional composition the first of its kind in India. The award certificate was presented to Shreyas but recognised the entire team. —*SALAR NEWS*

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Govt is diverting SC/ST funds for guarantees: LoP

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly, R Ashoka, on Tuesday accused the State government of "diverting funds" meant for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the SCSP and TSP components to finance its guarantee schemes. He also alleged that the Budget presented by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has undermined the principle of social justice.

During the discussion on the 2026–27 State budget in the Assembly, Ashoka claimed that substantial portions of funds earmarked for Dalit welfare had been diverted for other schemes over the past four years.

"In total, Rs 14,198 crore has been diverted this year," he said.

Listing the expenditure under these programmes, the former deputy CM said Rs 8,296.32 crore had been allocated for the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, Rs 1,537 crore for Shakti, Rs 1,612 crore for Anna Bhagya, Rs 2,591.6 crore for Gruha Jyothi and Rs 1,062 crore for Yuva Nidhi.

He claimed that the diversion of funds had increased over the years. "In 2023–24, Rs 11,144 crore was taken from SC/ST funds. In 2024–25, Rs 14,282.68 crore was taken. In 2025–26, Rs 13,343.84 crore was taken. In 2026–27, Rs 14,198.97 crore has been taken."

"In total, Rs 53,059.45 crore belonging to SC/ST communities has been taken during Siddaramaiah's tenure," he added. —*PTI*

'Incentivising industries to set up in N K'taka'

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Minister for Large and Medium Industries MB Patil on Tuesday said the State government is pursuing several new industrial projects in north Karnataka and has initiated talks with multiple companies to create employment opportunities in Vijayapura and Bagalkot districts.

Replying to a question raised by BJP MLC Prahlad Pujar in the Legislative Council, Patil said the government is implementing a new industrial policy aimed at encouraging investment outside Bengaluru and addressing regional imbalances in industrial development. "We have been in discussions with around nine or ten companies."

"As part of our industrial policy for 2025–30, we are continuing the campaign of 'Beyond Bengaluru'. We have divided the State into three zones — Zone 1, Zone 2, and Zone 3," Patil said.

"In Zone-1, we offer the highest incentives to attract industries, while Zone-2 gets slightly fewer incentives, and Zone-3 includes Bengaluru where incentives are minimal," he said.

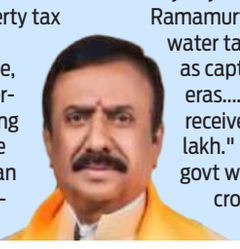
The government has adopted recommendations of the Nanjundappa Committee Report to provide additional incentives for investments in backward areas, he said. "More backward areas get an additional 3 per cent incentive and 'most backward' areas get 5 per cent, apart from the zonal incentives."

Reliance Industries, agribusiness company Viterra and renewable energy major Suzlon Energy are among the projects in the works. —*PTI*

State approves railway barricades to curb human-elephant conflict

A 7-km railway barricade has been approved for the Madikeri division and 20 km for the Nagarhole division in 2025–26 to curb human-elephant conflict in the regions, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Tuesday said on Tuesday while responding to a proposal raised by BJP MLC Suja Kushalappa during Zero Hour in the Legislative Council. He said the Forest Department is taking the issue seriously.

Tax terrorism: BJP on drone survey in City



The Opposition BJP accused the govt of "property tax terrorism" on Bengaluru's people, with 24,874 properties in the City being issued show-cause notices based on an ongoing drone survey. Jayanagar BJP MLA CK Ramamurthy said: "Roofs and water tanks are being taxed as captured by drone cameras.....One house has received a notice for Rs 30 lakh." DyCM DKS said the govt would recover Rs 688 crore.

Govt begins measures to prevent rural water shortages

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

The State government has initiated measures to prevent drinking water shortages in rural areas during the upcoming summer, Minister Priyank Kharge said on Tuesday.

District administrations have been instructed to closely monitor the situation and take immediate action, including hiring private borewells on a rental basis and supplying water through tankers wherever required.

Dried borewells will be restored through flushing and deepening, while new borewells will be drilled in unavoidable cases based on geologists' technical recommendations, said Kharge, Minister for Rural Development and Panchayat Raj.

"We have directed Gram Panchayats to conduct water quality testing and ensure proper cleaning of overhead tanks so that safe drinking water is available," he added.

Official data show shortages in 183 villages across 144 taluks in 21 districts. "Of these, 31 villages are supplied via 96 tankers, while 152 villages are receiving water through 154 rented private borewells. District administrations have been directed to address the situation on priority," he said.

Around 1,053 borewells are expected to be repaired this month. Emergency funds will be mobilised from Central and State Drought Relief Funds and departmental Task Force funds. —*PTI*

Doctor association calls off strike after govt's assurance

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

The Karnataka Government Medical Officers' Association on Tuesday called off its proposed indefinite strike after the State government agreed to address 13 of its 14 demands.

The Association had earlier highlighted severe staff shortages in the Health and Family Welfare Department, which currently has about 36,397 employees serving nearly 6 crore people. Doctors also sought amendments to Cadre and Recruitment Rules, updated seniority lists, timely promotions, restoration of in-service higher education opportunities and filling of nearly 40 per cent vacant posts.

The Association had planned a phased protest beginning 11 March, under which outpatient services would have been suspended from 11 to 15 March while emergency services continued. From 16 March, doctors and staff had threatened to abstain from duties entirely.

Health Department sources said the government held discussions with Association representatives ahead of the strike, leading to a breakthrough. Among the key assurances was the creation of an Additional Secretary post in the department to be filled by a technical expert.

Association President Dr Ravindra Meti said that further action would depend on the progress made. —*PTI*

Ballari hostel killing: Minor taken into custody

BALLARI, 10 MARCH

Police have taken into custody the minor accused involved in the clash at the hostel of Gurukul International School in Ballari that left one student dead and seven others seriously injured on Saturday night.

Addressing a joint press conference on Monday, Ballari Range IGP PS Harsha said the boy was traced after a 36-hour search operation. Acting on reliable information, police secured the student, a resident of B Gonal village.

Police teams analysed footage from nearly 7,500 CCTV cameras across the city to track his movements. Harsha said the case involves a minor and the investigation will follow provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act.

Ballari Superintendent of Police Suman D Pennekar said teams also monitored routes leading to pilgrimage centres such as Srisailam Temple and Mantralayam Raghavendra Swamy Temple during the search.

Police said the boy will be questioned with the assistance of psychologists, doctors and child protection officials.

Authorities have also sought a probe into whether the hostel had proper permission and if there were lapses by the school administration. —*Salar News*

AI giant Anthropic appears in Belagavi court

BELAGAVI, 10 MARCH

Anthropic Software's Pvt Ltd Director Ayyaz Mulla —ANI

- The case stems from a name dispute with both the US and Karnataka firms claiming the title

Anthropic India Private Limited, the Indian subsidiary of US-based AI firm Anthropic PBC, appeared before the Belagavi District and Commercial Court on Monday following a summons issued in a case filed by the Belagavi-based IT start-up Anthropic Softwares Private Limited.

The dispute centres on the use of the "Anthropic" brand name. The Belagavi start-up has accused the US company and its Indian subsidiary of infringing on its brand.

During Monday's hearing, Anthropic India Private Limited's counsel argued that although it is a subsidiary of the US company, it is a separate legal entity and has no connection with the claims in the suit.

The Belagavi company's counsel stated that both the US parent firm and its subsidiary are parties in the case.

Judge Manjunath Nayak posted the matter for hearing on 23 March. The court also directed that a fresh summons be issued to the US address of Anthropic PBC. — *ANI*

FESTIVITIES CONTINUE

SC bins plea against holding 'Kambala' outside DK, Udupi

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Supreme Court dismissed on Tuesday a plea against the holding of the buffalo racing sport 'Kambala' in parts of Karnataka other than Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, asking why it should be restricted only to a particular area.

The Kambala race, held in Karnataka between November and March, involves a pair of buffaloes tied to a plough and controlled by a person. They are made to run in parallel on muddy tracks in a competition where the fastest team wins.

Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta was hearing a plea filed by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India, challenging a 14 November order of the Karnataka HC.

The high court had rejected the request to restrain the state from notifying any place outside the two districts of Dakshin Kannada and Udupi for holding Kambala.

The counsel appearing for PETA India referred to an affidavit filed earlier by the state in the SC which was then dealing with pleas concerning Kambala.

The counsel said in that affidavit, the state had submitted that it was a sport that was traditional in the two coastal districts.

"It has nothing to do with the tradition in Bengaluru," the counsel argued, adding that now, the event is to be held at a ground in the state capital.

While dismissing the plea, the bench said, "One of these days, we may put some questions to PETA also." — *PTI*

NCP(SP) worker may be jailed over foul language

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

The Maharashtra legislative council's privileges committee on Tuesday recommended 30 days of civil imprisonment for NCP (SP) worker Suryakant More for allegedly using "foul and abusive" language against Chairman Ram Shinde. Committee chairman and BJP MLC Prasad Lad called it a serious breach of privilege. "Going by the gravity of the foul language used by NCP (SP) worker Suryakant More against Chairman Ram Shinde, the incident is considered a rare case. We recommend 30 days of civil imprisonment to More," Lad said. The punishment lapses if council proceedings are adjourned and will resume in the next session. The controversy dates to November 2024 during a Karjat-Jamkhed election dispute.—*PTI*

Assam hikes tea workers' daily wage by Rs 30

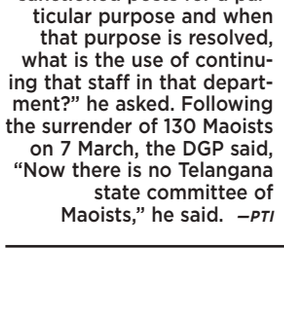
GUWAHATI, 10 MARCH

The Assam government has announced increasing the daily wage of tea garden workers by Rs 30 from next month, an official notification said. The hike will be applicable for workers in estate gardens as well as in small tea gardens in the state, which is the country's largest tea-producing state. "Consequent upon the recommendation of Minimum Wages Advisory Board for tea plantation workers of Assam in its meeting on 26 February, 2026, Governor of Assam is pleased to allow an interim increase of Rs 30 in the interim minimum wages of the tea plantation workers with effect from 1 April, 2026," the notification which was issued on 7 March said. —*PTI*

Is VSR trying to blame Ajit's crash on pilot, asks Rohit

PUNE, 10 MARCH

NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar questioned whether VSR Ventures owner VK Singh was trying to hold the pilot of the Learjet aircraft responsible for the crash which killed Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar and four others in January. The Crime Investigation Department questioned Singh and recorded his statement last week, a CID officer had said, without disclosing details. The CID has not issued any statement about the details regarding Singh's questioning. A Learjet 45 aircraft, operated by VSR Ventures, crashed near the Baramati air strip in Pune district on 28 January, killing Ajit Pawar and four others. Citing media reports about a submission purportedly made by Singh to the CID, Rohit said on X on Monday, "What exactly was recorded in the black box has not been revealed. —*PTI*



—*PTI*

T'gana CM seeks scaling down of anit-Naxal force

HYDERABAD, 10 MARCH

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy suggested that the police department should consider scaling down Greyhounds, a specialised commando force handling Left-Wing Extremist threats. Speaking at the "Telangana Police Retreat 2026" on Monday, Reddy said the 1,200 personnel in Greyhounds could be reassigned to other wings. "You have 1,200 well-trained people in the Greyhounds. In the wake of combing and other activities coming down, they can be rearranged in some other places. If there are sanctioned posts for a particular purpose and when that purpose is resolved, what is the use of continuing that staff in that department?" he asked. Following the surrender of 130 Maoists on 7 March, the DGP said, "Now there is no Telangana state committee of Maoists," he said. —*PTI*

No genuine WB voter will be axed: CEC

CEC dodges question on poll schedule as 60L voters remain under adjudication

KOLKATA, 10 MARCH

As West Bengal gears up for high-stakes Assembly elections, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Tuesday sought to quell the row over the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, assuring that no eligible voter would be removed and vowing to ensure violence-free and fair polls.

The assurance comes amid an escalating confrontation between EC and TMC, which has alleged large-scale voter deletions during the revision exercise. The issue has triggered protests, legal scrutiny and sharp political reactions.

With elections to the 294-member Assembly expected to be announced within a week, Kumar declined to directly say whether the poll schedule would be declared even as nearly 60 lakh voters remain under adjudication following the SIR exercise.

Addressing a press conference after two days of meetings with parties, Kumar warned against attempts to intimidate voters or election officials, signalling concern over Bengal's long history of poll-related violence.

"No eligible voter's name will be removed," he said, adding that the purpose of the SIR was to ensure "pure electoral rolls", a cornerstone of democracy.

To enhance transparency, the EC will ensure 100 per cent webcasting of polling stations across the state.

He appealed to voters to ensure polling takes place in a "violence-free and intimidation-free atmosphere". The EC has coined the slogan 'Chunao porbo, Paschimbanger gorbo' (the election festival is the pride of West Bengal).

Rejecting reports that "Logical Discrepancy" cases were unique to Bengal, Kumar said such cases were flagged in all 12 states where the SIR was conducted. Booth Level Officers examined voters unmapped with the 2002 rolls using submitted documents.

Around 4–5 per cent of voters failed to map themselves with the 2002 rolls after submitting forms, while 7–8 per cent were found to have mapped themselves incorrectly.

EC data show that about 63.66 lakh names, around 8.3 per cent of the electorate, have been deleted since the revision began in November, reducing the voter base from roughly 7.66 crore to just over 7.04 crore.

Nearly 60 lakh electors are under adjudication, with judicial officers having examined about 10 lakh cases so far.

Kumar said voters whose names were deleted could apply for re-inclusion through Form 6. The number of polling phases will be decided after the Commission reviews the consultations in Delhi, taking into account law-and-order preparedness.

West Bengal has nearly 80,000 polling stations, including about 61,000 in rural areas. Over 6,000 centenarians, 5.23 lakh new voters aged between 18–19 years. —*PTI*

CEC Gyanesh Kumar interacts with media persons during a press conference on poll preparedness for the West Bengal Assembly —*PTI*

Give judicial officers logistical support: SC to WB

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the West Bengal government and the Election Commission to provide all logistical support to judicial officers in the ongoing special intensive revision of electoral rolls in the state.

A three-judge bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices R Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi said the judicial officers, deployed in the SIR process, so far have dealt with 10.16 lakh objections and claims of those facing deletion from the electoral rolls.

The bench asked the EC to ensure that no mandatory step is introduced which can disrupt the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process unless approved by the Calcutta High Court chief justice. It said technical disruptions in the EC's portal shall be looked into and ensured that no such disruptions take place.

The bench said new login IDs for judicial officers be created promptly to ensure smooth revision of electoral rolls. It also said that decisions of the judicial officers cannot be examined in appeals. —*PTI*

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee paints on a canvas, at a five-day sit-in a against alleged arbitrary deletions in SIR electoral rolls. —*PTI*

Mamata draws 'SIR', 'vanish' on paper in anti-SIR protest

KOLKATA, 10 MARCH

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday was seen symbolically drawing on a paper 'SIR' and 'Vanish' on the fifth day of her protest against Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls to convey her opposition to the alleged deletion of voters.

At the dharna stage at Metro Channel in central Kolkata, Banerjee was seen drawing with colours on a green board placed on a stand. On the top of the drawing board, she wrote "SIR", while in the middle she wrote the word "Vanish" in white.

She then drew several small irregular circles and a larger outline resembling a map and gradually whitewashed parts of the green board with white colour, apparently symbolising voters being erased from the rolls.

The CM was seen drawing when the CEC was holding a press conference.

Banerjee has been staging the protest since March 6, alleging that the SIR conducted by the Election Commission of India has led to large-scale deletion of genuine voters in the state ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections. —*PTI*

LoP Rahul Gandhi being tied a turban as he visits farmer Sanjay Malik's house on Tuesday to attend his daughter's wedding in Sonipat, Haryana. —*PTI*

BJP terms RaGa 'urban naxal'

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Union Minister Giriraj Singh on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of behaving like an "urban naxal" and likening him to the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar.

Speaking to reporters inside the Parliament complex, he alleged that Gandhi has been avoiding debate and voting in the House, and referred to discussions related to the West Asia conflict and the recent no-confidence motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

"I do not understand. I have not seen such a LoP.

He has no vision and behaves like an urban naxal. As the LoP, you inform the House that you want a debate on certain issues and seek a vote on them. Why are you running away from them?" Singh posed.

He claimed that as the Leader of the Opposition, Gandhi should inform the Lok Sabha if he wants a discussion or a vote on an issue instead of "staying away from the proceedings".

"He is the same for Congress as the last Mughal emperor was for the Mughal dynasty — a clueless last prince of a fake Gandhi family," the BJP leader said.

Separately, addressing a press conference here, BJP spokesman Sambit Patra on Tuesday called Congress leader Rahul Gandhi the "architect and designer" of protests meant to "embarrass" the country during the recently held World AI Summit and accused him of attempting to demean and defame India.

"Yesterday, Rahul Gandhi himself said, 'Haan, humne kaam kar diya' (Yes, we got the job done). The country could see a Mir Jafar-like smile on his face when he claimed they had 'finished' the World AI Summit happening in India," Patra said. —*PTI*

BJP mocks Stalin, says DMK was NDA's ally in 1999

CHENNAI, 10 MARCH

Tamil Nadu BJP on Tuesday ridiculed Chief Minister M K Stalin's remark that the BJP wanted to saffronise the state and said it was late Chief Minister M Karunanidhi who had planned it in 1999.

Referring to the DMK president's comment at the party's 12th conference in Tiruchirappalli on 9 March, Tamil Nadu BJP's chief spokesperson Narayanan Thirupathy said, "It was your father who planned to make Tamil Nadu a saffron state in 1999."

He was apparently referring to the DMK joining the NDA then led by A B Vajpayee in 1999. Following the NDA's victory in that election, the DMK leaders were provided berths in the Vajpayee cabinet.

"They are planning to somehow make Tamil Nadu a saffron country. As long as there is a black-red crowd (of the DMK), no matter who comes, it will not happen," Stalin said in the conference.

"It was your father who planned to make Tamil Nadu a saffron state in 1999," Thirupathy said in a post on the social media platform 'X.'

In a lighter vein, the BJP leader remarked that the colours black and red (colours of the DMK flag) are synonymous with the dress code of Ayyappa devotees and Om Shakti devotees - the ones who support saffron.

Addressing the conference, Stalin alleged that AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami, out of selfishness and in order to become CM, turned into the BJP's "slave" and mortgaged the party in Delhi. Using Palaniswami, the BJP was trying to "destroy the entire AIADMK," he alleged —*PTI*

No candidate withdraws from Odisha RS poll race

BHUBANESWAR/ PATNA, 10 MARCH

No candidate withdrew from the race for the Rajya Sabha elections in Odisha on the last day for withdrawal of nominations on Monday, leaving five nominees in the fray for four seats and setting the stage for a contest after a gap of 12 years, officials said.

The candidates in the fray are Manmohan Samal and Sujeet Kumar of the BJP, Santrupt Misra and urologist Datteswar Hota of the BJD, and independent nominee Dilip Ray.

Voting will be held on 16 March from 9am to 4pm, while counting of votes will take place at 5pm the same day, an official said, adding that the election process will conclude by 20 March.

The last Rajya Sabha election in Odisha that required voting was held in 2014 when five candidates contested for four seats.

According to the current numbers in the 147-member Odisha assembly, the ruling BJP is expected to comfortably secure two seats, while the opposition BJD is likely to win one. The fourth seat is expected to witness a contest.

Meanwhile, RJD National Working President Tejashwi Yadav convened a meeting of party legislators and MLAs of other 'Mahagathbandhan' constituents on Tuesday to chalk out a strategy ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls in Bihar on 16 March, a party leader said.

The meeting will be held in the afternoon at Yadav's official residence in Patna, he said. —*PTI*

'ATTACK IS HYPOCRITICAL'

India flays Pak for Afghan strikes

UNITED NATIONS, 10 MARCH

India has strongly condemned Pakistan's airstrikes on Afghanistan as a "flagrant violation" of international law, saying it is "hypocritical" to invoke Islamic solidarity while carrying out attacks that have killed civilians during Ramadan.

Addressing a Security Council meeting on the situation in Afghanistan on Monday, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni reiterated New Delhi's support for the UN Secretary-General's call for compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, and for ensuring the protection of civilians. "India strongly condemns the airstrikes on Afghan territory, which are flagrant violations of international law and the UN Charter and the principle of state sovereignty.

"It is hypocritical to espouse high principles of international law and Islamic solidarity on the one hand, while mercilessly carrying out air strikes during the holy month of Ramadan that have killed 185 innocent civilians as of March 6, more than half of whom are women and children," he said.

According to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), around 55 per cent of the 185 victims were women and children, and more than 100,000 people have been displaced due to the attacks. India reiterated its support for the Secretary General's call, urging compliance with obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and ensuring protection of civilians. Pakistan had launched airstrikes in Afghanistan in late February, resulting in heavy casualties and injuries. —*PTI*

Over 185 civilians killed in 6 March strikes on Afganistan —*PTI*

VISION FOR A MODERN FORCE

India unveils blueprint for military reform

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

An ambitious vision document broadly outlining a series of strategic reforms, capability enhancements and organisational changes required to bolster the Indian military was unveiled by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday.

The document, prepared by the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS), is a strategic blueprint to transform the Indian armed forces into a modern, multi-domain, and integrated force by the centenary of India's Independence.

The release of the 'Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military' came eight months after the military conflict between India and Pakistan. Following the 7 to 10 May conflict, all the three forces were asked to work on the lessons learnt from it.

The vision document envisages the transformation of the military into an integrated, multi-domain and agile force capable of deterring adversaries and to effectively respond to any conflict.

A central pillar of the vision is the emphasis on jointness and synergy among the services, promoting greater coordination in planning, operations and capability development, according to the defence ministry.

It said the blueprint has been articulated by Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff to transform the defence forces into a modern, integrated and technologically-advanced military capable of supporting India's aspiration to become 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India) by 2047.

Another key focus area is to promote self-reliance in defence to encourage the development and adoption of indigenous technologies and solutions tailored to the country's unique security requirements.

Strengthening domestic defence manufacturing and technological capabilities is likely to enhance operational readiness, ministry said. -PTI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during the release of the book 'Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military —*PTI*

Excise policy case: HC seeks Kejriwal's response

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, his deputy Manish Sisodia and 21 others who were accused in the excise policy case to respond to a plea by the Enforcement Directorate to expunge "unwarranted" remarks made against it by the trial court.

The case is listed for further hearing on 19 March.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma said the observations in the trial court order, which discharged all the 23 accused in the CBI case, appeared to be general in nature.

"These are general observations and have nothing to do with the case. He (trial judge) was not saying it in the context of this case. He was feeling whatever he was feeling... He thought it was an unfair investigation, so he made observations as some judges, including me, generally do," the court said verbally.

Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, who appeared for the ED, contended that the trial court judge "had no business" making adverse statements and allegations in a case the ED was not even a party to.

On 27 February, the trial court discharged Kejriwal, Sisodia and others in the Delhi liquor policy case, pulling up the CBI by saying that its case was wholly unable to survive judicial scrutiny and stood discredited in its entirety. —PTI

Commercial LPG shortage hits restaurants

Restaurants and hotels in many states cut menu to conserve fuel, domestic customers unaffected

NEW DELHI/CHENNAI, 10 MARCH

Shrinking menus and cold stoves all over. Dining out is suddenly not so easy. The West Asia conflict is knocking at restaurant doors across India with the looming threat of commercial LPG shortage forcing eateries to innovate or face shutdown.

As the war disrupts global fuel lifelines, including India's LPG supplies, the government has prioritised domestic cooking gas supply to households, leading to a supply crunch for hotels and restaurants which use commercial LPG.

The prospect of shuttered kitchens, lost jobs and many people dependent on outside food forced to think about where they will get their next meal is very real, said industry insiders as they prepare to tackle the crisis.

Closure could be just days away for many establishments.

Desperate make do measures include low fuel menus, food that can be cooked on electrical appliances and limiting sales of everyday staples like pooris, dosas, tea and coffee. From Delhi to Chennai and Mumbai to Kolkata, the stories came in from all over.

Some hotel owners in Chennai have worked out strategies to counter the shortage of LPG caused by the West Asia war —*ANI*

Workers load LPG cylinders at a depot following recent price hikes for both domestic and commercial units, in Nagpur in Maharashtra, —*PTI*

Many restaurateurs in Tamil Nadu, for instance, expected their existing stock of LPG to last for one or two days and said they were forced to cut down on their menu.

"It is like a second Covid-19 lockdown for us. For dosa, tea or coffee, the stove should receive LPG supply non-stop," the head of a popular restaurant chain said about the popular dishes that keep his business going.

"We expect to run for one or two days with existing stock. If there is no supply of commercial LPG cylinders, we have no other option but to close down," he added.

Another popular hotel in Chennai has also tweaked its menu.

"We have stopped preparing fried rice, side dishes, and appam as these items require more LPG. We do not know how long this will continue," said an executive.

Indian Hotel & Restaurant Association (AHAR) president Vijay Shetty said 20 per cent of hotels in Mumbai have closed due to the shortage LPG.

Maharashtra Food and Civil Supplies Minister Chhagan Bhujbal warned in a statement that "commercial LPG supply may decrease in the coming days as oil companies have been directed by the Centre to prioritise domestic consumers."

Piyush Kankaria, head of the National Restaurant Association of India's Kolkata chapter, told PTI that the city has nearly 5,000 restaurants and a quick survey among members indicated that many establishments are already running out of cooking fuel.

"About 40 per cent of restaurants have indicated there will be immediate disruption, while another 30 to 40 per cent said they can run operations only for a few more days as they have limited stock," he said.

In Delhi, Joy Singh, co-founder of restaurant chain Raasta, told PTI the situation in the city appears relatively stable compared with some other major cities but it has started exploring alternatives to reduce LPG dependence.

"We have started making arrangements and are buying electrical appliances for cooking. We may also make a few changes in the menu so that we can save gas," he said.

Restaurant operators in New Delhi also noted that outlets using piped natural gas have not yet faced major disruption but pressure has come down from about 20 per cent to 18 per cent and it may decrease further.

Arjun Sagar Gupta of 'The Piano Man' added that restaurants may have to temporarily adapt by relying more on electric equipment wherever possible.

"However, that transition is not always seamless, as some cooking techniques and menu items are specifically designed for gas-based cooking," he said.

Amit Gupta, joint secretary of the New Delhi Traders' Association, agreed. He also added that eateries may also have to remove certain dishes from their menus as not all cuisines can be prepared using electrical appliances.

Indian dishes like dal makhni, rajma, biryani, nihari, and qorma, for instance, are slow-cooked for hours on low heat to bring out their flavours.

Deepti Pandey, owner of Lucknow-based Kakke Di Hatti, admitted that they were about to run out of cial gas supply. "I think we may barely have enough reserves to last a couple of days." — *PTI*

Search on after Pak drone seen in Samba district

JAMMU, 10 MARCH

Security forces have launched a search operation after reports of suspected Pakistani drone activity along the International Border in Samba district. The movement of a suspected enemy drone was detected over Daboh late Monday night, prompting deployment of additional forces and a thorough search to prevent weapons or narcotics from being air-dropped, officials said. A joint operation involving the Army, police, and Border Security Force (BSF) is ongoing in the area. Police and BSF also searched Bhai Nallah, Lala Chack, and Malani in Rajpura following reports of suspicious movement early today. —*PTI*

Puppy beaten to death in UP, five booked

SHAHJAHANPUR, 10 MARCH

Police in Uttar Pradesh's Shahjahanpur district have booked five individuals after a puppy was beaten to death for straying into a graveyard. Superintendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi said the pet, belonging to Karan of Lal Teli Bajariya, entered the graveyard, prompting five people present to start beating it. Karan filmed the incident from a neighbour's roof. Despite hiding under a cot, the puppy was pulled out and beaten again, dying instantly. The accused then stuffed the carcass in a sack and left. A complaint was filed on Monday by a Jeev Sahayog Foundation official, and a case registered under cruelty and animal protection laws. —*PTI*

— *PTI*

HC issues notice to Dileep in actress assault case

KOCHI, 10 MARCH

The Kerala High Court has issued a notice to actor Dileep and nine others in an appeal filed by the state government challenging the trial court's verdict in the 2017 actress sexual assault case. The appeal contests the acquittal of Dileep and three others and seeks an increase in punishment for six individuals sentenced to 20 years' rigorous imprisonment. The appeal also sought to set aside the acquittal of Dileep, Charley Thomas, Sanil Kumar, and Sarath, claiming their acquittals were "wholly illegal and unmerited". The appeal argues the trial court failed to impose adequate sentences, considering the crime's seriousness and its effect on society. The case shook Kerala society, with Pulsar Suni allegedly sexually assaulting the actress and also recording the act. —*PTI*

2 die in Meghalaya firing over polls; Net suspended

SHILLONG, 10 MARCH

Two persons were killed when security forces opened fire to disperse violent mobs in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district early on Tuesday amid tensions over the Gharo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC) election nomination process, officials said.

West Garo Hills SP Abraham T Sangma said the incident took place in the Chibinang area, where a clash broke out between tribal and non-tribals. He said the situation in the area is under control.

The incident came after the Meghalaya government ordered a 48-hour suspension of internet in the district from 10 March following reports of circulation of misinformation on social media that could threaten law and order during the nomination process. Voice calls and SMS services, however, remain unaffected.

Security has also been reinforced at nomination centres as the filing of nomination papers for the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC) elections will continue till 16 March.

The unrest began after one Estamur Momin was assaulted when he arrived at the deputy commissioner's office to file his nomination —*ANI*

The unrest began after former legislator from Phulbari, Estamur Momin, was assaulted by protesters when he arrived at the deputy commissioner's office in Tura on Monday to file his nomination for the GHADC polls scheduled for 10 April. Protesters demanded that non-tribals should not contest in GHADC elections. On 17 February, the GHADC had passed a resolution making it mandatory for candidates to produce valid ST certificates while filing nominations. — *PTI*

SC to examine Centre's plea against HC order on IT rules

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Supreme Court agreed to examine the Centre's plea against the Bombay High Court verdict that struck down the 2023 amendments to IT Rules aimed at regulating fake content on social media against the government.

The SC, however, refused to stay the 2024 Bombay High Court verdict, which not only struck down the amended IT rules but also termed them "unconstitutional." Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices R Mahadevan and Joymalya Bagchi issued notices on Tuesday to the original petitioners, including comedian Kunal Kamra, the Editors Guild of India, and the Association of Indian Magazines. While refusing to stay the HC verdict, the CJI said that it would be better if the issue is finally decided. The Bombay High Court, on 26 September 2024, struck down the amended IT Rules aimed at regulating fake content against the government.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, sought a stay on the high court's order, arguing that the government did not intend to "block content completely" but only to regulate misinformation.

The regulations mandated the FCU to flag any content on government perceived as fake. If flagged, social media intermediaries should either remove the content or post a disclaimer, risking legal problems if they opted for the latter. — *PTI*

'Frame compensation policy for Covid shots'

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Centre to frame a no-fault compensation policy for serious adverse events after Covid-19 vaccination.Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said the existing mechanism for monitoring adverse events following immunisation will continue.

The bench clarified that its judgement shall not preclude any person from pursuing other legal remedies.

The SC was delivering its verdict on pleas, including the one which alleged that two women lost their lives in 2021 after taking the first dose of the Covishield vaccine. The plea alleged that both of them suffered from severe adverse effects after immunisation. — *PTI*

Wall collapse kills seven at Gurugram site

Rescue personnel carry out an operation after a wall collapsed on Monday, in Gurugram —*PTI*

GURUGRAM, 10 MARCH

Seven workers were killed and four others, including three from Nepal, were injured when a mound of soil collapsed on them at a construction site here, officials said on Tuesday. The incident occurred on Monday evening at the Signature Global Society in Gurugram's Sidhrawali area.

DSP Bhiwadi, Rajasthan, Yogesh, told reporters in Bhiwadi that construction of a Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) was on when soil suddenly collapsed, and some labourers got trapped.

Around 12 to 15 labourers got trapped under the debris. on receiving information, a police team from the Bilaspur Police Station, Gurugram, along with State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and the NDRF rescued the labourers.

They rushed them to a nearby hospital at Bhiwadi in Rajasthan, where seven of them were declared dead, the officials said.

Talking to the media in Rajasthan's Bhiwadi, a kin of one of the deceased workers said the labourers were working several feet below when soil collapsed on them. — *PTI*

M'rashtra plans panel to tackle social media slurs

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced on Tuesday that a committee headed by the Director General of Police (DGP) will be established to combat attempts to defame individuals via social media.

Fadnavis made the statement in the legislative assembly while replying to a question on cybercrimes. The committee, led by the state DGP, will examine the issue and propose measures to take action against social media defamation cases.

Earlier, Minister of State for Home, Yogesh Kadam, informed the House that new methods of cybercrime are emerging with advanced technologies. The government has developed a specialised mobile app to raise awareness and alert citizens about such crimes.

Through the app, 21 crore awareness messages will be sent monthly to educate people on cybercrime prevention, Kadam stated. — *PTI*

Min Ganesh, wife reconcile after his cheating; no plaint now

T'PURAM, 10 MARCH

Kerala Transport Minister KB Ganesh Kumar's wife said on Tuesday that she will not be filing a complaint against her husband as he has admitted his mistake and apologised. Speaking to a news channel, Bindhu Menon said that as she did not take his calls, but the minister called her sister and "spoke emotionally."

"My intention was not to tarnish the image of the government or my husband. That is what I said yesterday also. He called this morning and apologised. That is what I was waiting for," Bindhu told the channel.

Earlier, Ganesh had dismissed the allegations against him as "politically motivated." He also said defiantly, "Love is not a crime' and remarked sarcastically that he has "5,000 loves." He said his private life should not overshadow his administrative record.

Meanwhile, the Congress stuck to its demand for Kumar's resignation.

KPCC president Sunny Joseph said that it was not a simple family matter and demanded Kumar's resignation. — *PTI*

3 J&K Jal Shakti workers fired for anti-India activities

SRINAGAR, 10 MARCH

The Jammu and Kashmir government has dismissed three workers from the Jal Shakti department over alleged involvement in anti-national and subversive activities, officials announced on Tuesday.

The dismissed workers include two from Kishtwar district and one from Anantnag district in South Kashmir. Their names are Liyaqat Ali Bhagwan from Bhagwan Mohalla Huller, Kishtwar; Kousar Hussain Bhagwan, son of Mohammad Akbar Bhagwan from Hunjala, Kishtwar; and Showkat Ahmad Zargar from Iqbal Mohalla Bijbehara, Anantnag.

Shaleen Kabra, the Financial Commissioner of the Jal Shakti department, issued the dismissal orders. Liyaqat, a need-based casual labourer posted at Berwar, Kishtwar; Kousar Hussain, also a casual labourer at Huller; and Showkat, a daily-rated worker at Bijbehara, were identified.

FIRs were registered against Liyaqat and Kousar under UAPA sections related to terrorism, conspiracy, harbouring terrorists, and support for terrorist organisations. Showkat faces charges under Section 307 of Ranbir Penal Code, Arms Act, and sections of UAPA. — *PTI*

US STUDY FINDS

Negative people could make you age faster, says study

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

"Hasslers," or people in one's close social network who make life difficult, may have an effect on aging, with each additional hassler responsible for about 1.5 per cent faster aging and nine months more than the biological age, a study found. Aging effects were found to be especially pronounced when a hassler is a relative. Women, daily smokers, people in poor health and those with adverse childhood experiences are more likely to report hasslers in their social networks.

Findings published in the journal 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' (PNAS) showed that negative social ties are not rare within close relationships, with nearly 30 per cent reporting at least one hassler in their network.

The journal 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' (PNAS) said that negative social ties exist even within close personal relationships —*AI*

The researchers also found that hasslers tend to occupy peripheral network positions defined by a single type of interaction. — *PTI*

CBSE question paper's QR code leads to song

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

A QR code printed on the CBSE Class 12 mathematics question paper led to the music video of 'Never Gonna Give You Up' by British singer Rick Astley.

It became a classic internet prank known as 'rickrolling' even though the board maintained that the question paper remains uncompromised.

The mathematics examination was held on 9 March. Soon after the exam got over, images of the question paper began circulating on social media with students alleging that the QR code printed on it redirected them to the 1987 hit song's video on YouTube.

QR codes are typically included on board exam papers for authentication. The board noted that while the concerns about the veracity of the question papers have been put to rest, the matter has been viewed seriously, and necessary steps are being taken by the board to ensure such things are not repeated in future.

-X/@AADITYAPARKASH

Rickrolling is an internet slang for a prank where a user clicks a link disguised as something appealing but is instead directed to the music video for Rick Astley's 1987 hit, 'Never Gonna Give You Up.' — *PTI*

67 YEARS SINCE TIBETAN UPRISING

Out Of Tibet
In Tibet
I WANT TO SEE MY MOTHERLAND
I WANT TO SEE MY MOTHERLAND
I WANT TO SEE MY MOTHERLAND
TIBET is NOT a part of CHINA
"China Stop Killing in Tibet"
LONG LIVE H.H THE DALAI
CHINA! STOP GENOCIDE IN TIBET

Members of the Tibetan Youth Congress marked the 67th Tibetan National Uprising Day with protests and commemorations at Freedom Park in Bengaluru. Police detained 24 people who were protesting near the Chinese embassy in New Delhi on Tuesday to maintain law and order. The uprising marks the 1959 revolt by Tibetans in Lhasa against Chinese rule, after which the Dalai Lama to fled to Dharamshala in Himachal Pradesh —*MOHAMMED ASAD*

India's neighbours battle energy crisis amid Iran war

As the Iran war continues to disrupt global energy markets, several of India's neighbours, including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan, have introduced emergency measures ranging from fuel price hikes and energy conservation steps to work-from-home orders and the temporary closure of educational institu-tions.

Global crude oil prices have crossed USD 100 per barrel for the first time in four years following esca-lating tensions in West Asia, triggering fears of supply disruptions and energy shortages across South Asia.

Global crude oil prices have crossed USD 100 per barrel for the first time in four years following esca-lating tensions in West Asia, triggering fears of supply disruptions and energy shortages across South Asia —*AI*

SRI LANKA RAISES FUEL PRICES

Sri Lanka has increased retail fuel prices by more than eight per cent with effect from mid-night Monday in a bid to curb hoarding and panic buying.

The state-run Ceylon Petroleum Corporation said prices of widely used petrol and diesel varieties have been raised by LKR 22 per litre under the latest revision.

Officials said the move was aimed at preventing hoarding amid fears of supply shortag-es. Long queues have been seen outside filling stations since 28 February after hostil-ities intensified follow-ing US-Iran strikes against Iran, raising concerns about global oil supply disruptions.

The corporation, however, said Sri Lanka currently has adequate fuel stocks that are expected to last until the end of April.

BANGLADESH SHUTS SCHOOLS, BOOSTS FUEL SUPPLY

In Bangladesh, authorities have ordered the closure of schools and universities as part of efforts to re-duce elec-tricity consumption during the ongoing energy strain.

Educational institutions in the country consume signifi-cant electricity for hostels, classrooms, laboratories and cooling systems. Officials said shutting them temporarily would help ease pressure on the already stressed power grid. At the same time, Bangladesh is receiving 5,000 tonnes of diesel from India through a cross-border pipe-line. The fuel will enter the country via the Parbatipur border, according to Bangladesh Petroleum Corpora-tion. Its chairman, Muhammad Rezanur Rahman, said the shipment is part of an existing agreement under which India supplies about 180,000 tonnes of diesel annu-ally through the pipeline.

Earlier in the week, Bangladesh also launched inspection drives to assess fuel stocks across the country.

The Bangladesh Energy Ministry said mobile courts were deployed in Dhaka to prevent illegal stockpiling and sale of fuel beyond prescribed limits. During inspections, some stations were found tem-porarily dry while others were operating normally un-der regulatory guidelines.

PAKISTAN IMPOSES WORK-FROM-HOME MEA-SURES

In Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a series of austerity and fuel-saving measures aimed at reducing the economic impact of rising oil prices.

Addressing the nation on state-run television, Sharif said the region was facing the threat of a broader conflict and that Pakistan's economy — heavily dependent on oil imports from Gulf countries — was al-ready under pres-sure. Under the new mea-sures, 50 per cent of employees in both the public and private sectors will work from home. Offices will also operate on a four-day working week.

However, banks and key industries will be exempted from the restrictions.

The government will also cut fuel allocation to official vehi-cles by 50 per cent for the next two months, while about 60 per cent of government vehi-cles will remain off the roads during the period. Sharif also announced financial austerity steps across the political and bureaucratic system.

Cabinet ministers and advis-ers will forgo their salaries for two months, while the salaries of parliamen-tarians will be reduced by 25 per cent. Senior government officials earning above Rs 300,000 per month will surrender two days' salary as a one-time measure.

Government departments will reduce overall spending by 20 per cent. The govern-ment has also banned the pur-chase of new cars, air-conditioning systems and other lux-ury items. Official foreign travel by ministers, advisers and bureaucrats has been sus-pended, though essential trips will be allowed.

Authorities have also ordered a shift to teleconfer-ences and online meetings to reduce fuel consumption linked to travel. State dinners and official iftar events have been banned as part of the cost-cutting measures.

STRAIT OF HORMUZ DISRUPTION

The regional anxiety stems from disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow water-way connect-ing the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman through which nearly one-fifth of the world's oil supply passes.

The passage has effectively been paralysed after several ships were attacked by Iran in retaliation for joint US-Israel strikes. —*Salar News*

SALAR

Oil rain or acid rain? Iranians are falling sick

Reports are emerging of black rain falling over parts of Iran in the hours after US-Israeli air-strikes on oil depots on the weekend, with some outlets describing it as "acid rain".

Iranian residents have reported headaches, diffi-culty breathing, and oil-con-taminated rain settling on buildings and cars. Iran's Red Crescent Society warned rainfall following the strikes could be "highly dangerous and acidic."

As an atmospheric chem-ist and chemical engineer who researches air pollu-tion, these reports are very worrying, and indicate much more than just acid rain.

This rain would include acids, but also likely a host of other pollutants that are harmful to humans and the environment in the short and long term. It may even be worse than the term "acid rain" conveys.

More broadly, the thick clouds of toxic smoke over densely populated areas in Iran are also a major prob-lem for anyone breathing this air right now.

WHAT COULD THIS 'ACID RAIN' BE?

One of the primary ways air pollutants are removed from the atmosphere is through rain. When you have significant levels of pollutants in the air, they will be collected by falling water droplets and "rain out" of the atmosphere.

That's why we are getting these reports of black rain falling from the sky after the oil depots were struck – evidence of just how con-taminated the local air must be.

To me, this black rain indicates that toxic pollut-ants such as hydrocarbons, ultrafine particles known as PM2.5, and carcinogenic compounds called polycy-clic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) have made their way into the rain.

On top of this, there would be a mix of other unknown chemicals, likely including heavy metals and inorganic compounds from the build-ing materials and every-thing else caught up in the initial explosions and the ensuing fires.

The smoke from the bombed oil depots would also contain sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide, which are precursors to forming sulfuric acid and nitric acid in the air. This acid then makes its way into water droplets and is responsible for what we conventionally label acid rain.

The acid rain we heard so much about in the past decades was primarily caused by sulfur dioxide produced by burning fossil fuels. Sulfur is naturally present in crude oil but is now mostly removed at the refining stage.

Aside from the rain, it's worth remembering that all smoke is toxic; if you can smell it, it can be at levels that are harming you.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS?

In the short term, people exposed to this black smoke in Iran might have head-aches or difficulty breath-ing, especially if they have asthma or lung disease.

Vulnerable populations – such as older people, young children and people with disabilities – are more at risk. Exposure to toxic air pollution during pregnancy can also lead to lower birth weights.

In the longer term, expo-sure to the compounds in the air and in this black rain is potentially increas-ing people's cancer risk. When ultrafine particles (PM2.5) are inhaled, they can get into your blood-stream.

This has been linked to a range of health impacts, including cancers, neuro-logical conditions, and vari-ous cardiovascular condi-tions.

Once these heavily pollut-ed plumes of air have their pollutants washed into nat-ural waterways, they can also start to affect aquatic life, as well as human drink-ing water sources.

Another issue is that this black rain is depositing these compounds on build-ings, roads and surfaces, which means they can make their way back into the air when disturbed by strong winds.

A LEGACY OF WAR

There has been growing attention on the environ-mental impact of conflict worldwide. Part of this has emerged in the wake of past wars in Iraq and Kuwait, where there was a large-scale deconstruction of oil wells and the use of burn pits.

We now know there are long-term health impacts on returning service people, including Australians. So we can assume local popula-tions are also profoundly affected.

In the short term, people exposed to this smoke and black rain in Iran should try to wear masks or face cover-ings, seek refuge from it, stay indoors, close doors and windows, and try to keep the air out.

It is also important to clean hard surfaces where possible, particularly indoors, to reduce exposure to deposited pollutants.

On the ground, of course, this may be very difficult to achieve in the chaos of war. —*PTI*

Iranian residents have reported headaches, difficulty breathing, and oil-contaminated rain settling on buildings and cars —*SCREENGRAB*

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Surging oil prices expose global supply chain crisis amid war

The escalating conflict between Iran, the US and Israel have taken a criti-cal turn. The strait of Hormuz – one of the most important shipping routes for oil and gas – is facing significant disrup-tion. The strait is the main route connecting Persian Gulf ports in Iran and some of the region's other oil producers to the open ocean.

The strikes on Iran are already having tangible effects: energy flows are slow-ing, markets are reacting and supply chains are under pres-sure. This is not just a region-al conflict – it is a global sup-ply chain crisis unfolding in real time.

As an expert on supply chains, I am acutely aware of how central the strait is – not only for the stability of the region but also to the function-ing of the global economy.

This narrow corridor is one of the world's most critical chokepoints – around a fifth of the world's oil passes through the strait daily. Its sudden dis-ruption represents a "choke-point failure" – a breakdown at a critical node that triggers cascading effects across global systems.

Tanker traffic has dropped sharply, with vessels waiting in surrounding waters as ship owners reassess the risks. Oil prices surged in response to the strikes and the threat to shipping routes. Analysts have warned that prices could climb significantly higher if the disruption persists.

But crucially, this reaction was not driven solely by actu-al shortages. Markets respond to uncertainty itself. The mere possibility that several mil-lion barrels per day could be disrupted is enough to push prices up, even before supply is properly hit. This reflects a broader feature of geopolitical risk: expectations and percep-tions can be as economically powerful as material disrup-tions.

Because energy underpins almost every sector, these price increases transmit rap-idly through supply chains. Higher fuel costs raise trans-portation expenses, increase production costs and ultimate-ly feed into inflation across goods and services that even-tually land with consumers.

The strikes on Iran are already having tangible effects: energy flows are slowing, markets are reacting and supply chains are under pressure —*AI*

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE GULF STATES

The disruption is not confined to the Strait. Instability across the wider Gulf region also affects the United Arab Emirates, as well as other strategically important ener-gy producers and logistics hubs, such as Qatar, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

This dimension matters because the Gulf functions not only as an energy supplier but also as a crossroads in global trade and logistics.

The result is a shift to more widespread insecurity, where both energy flows and trade infrastructure are simultane-ously at risk.

Energy is the heart of global supply chains. Manufacturing depends on electricity and fuel, transport relies on oil-based logistics and agricul-ture depends heavily on natu-ral gas-derived fertilisers. When energy flows are dis-rupted or become more expen-sive, the effects propagate across entire networks.

Research on geopolitical cri-ses shows that disruptions to key inputs such as oil and gas quickly translate into broader supply chain instability. This affects production, trade and the availability of goods far beyond the conflict zone.

For decades, global supply chains have been optimised for efficiency. This means that they concentrate sourcing and production in regions that minimise costs. This model has delivered large economic benefits, but it has also creat-ed weaknesses in the struc-ture.

The concentration of energy flowing through a single chokepoint such as the strait of Hormuz exemplifies this trade-off. When it is disrupted, the system lacks resilience.

In response, supply chains are likely to accelerate efforts to diversify and invest in alternative energy routes and sources. Countries that are heavily dependent on oil tran-siting through the Gulf will seek to expand strategic reserves, diversify their import routes and invest in pipelines that bypass mari-time chokepoints.

But at the same time, geopo-litical instability strengthens the case for renewable ener-gy, electrification and region-al energy integration. Expanding solar, wind and green hydrogen capacity reduces exposure to concen-trated fossil fuel corridors. And cross-border electricity connections can improve flex-ibility during shocks. In this sense, resilience is also an energy transition issue.

At the same time, instability in conflict-hit regions can fuel the rise of informal and ille-gal supply chains, particular-ly where governance is weak-ened.

What's more, supply chains themselves are increasingly shaped by geopolitical forces, as states use trade, energy and logistics networks as instruments of power.

For consumers, this could mean greater price volatility, shortages and reduced choice as firms adjust sourcing strat-egies in response to sanctions, trade restrictions or security risks.

A TURNING POINT FOR GLOBALISATION?

The situation in the strait of Hormuz may mark a turning point in how global supply chains are understood. It has shone a light on a fundamen-tal tension at the heart of glo-balisation.

Efficiency depends on sourc-ing and production being con-centrated in a few locations, but resilience depends on diversification. When critical links in the chain fail, the consequences extend far beyond their immediate loca-tion.

This war demonstrates that supply chains are not merely economic systems. They are deeply embedded in geopoliti-cal realities. The challenge ahead is not simply to man-age disruption, but to rede-sign supply chains and ener-gy sources for a world in which geopolitical risk is no longer exceptional, but struc-tural. —*The Conversation*

Aus grants asyulm to 5 members of Iran football team

WELLINGTON, 10 MARCH

Australia has granted asylum to five members of the Iranian women's football team who were visiting the country for a tournament when the Iran war began, Australia's Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke said on Tuesday. Members of the team had not sung the Iranian national anthem before their first match, raising fears that that they might be persecuted at home. Even US President Donald Trump had spoken about the matter. In the early hours of Tuesday local time, Australian federal police officers transported five of the women from their hotel in Gold Coast, Australia "to a safe location" after they made asylum requests. The Iranian team arrived in Australia for the Women's Asian Cup last month, before the Iran war began. The future of the 21 others is unclear. *—PTI*

Drone killed 1,243 people in Haiti in a year: HRW

SAN JOSE, 10 MARCH

Human Rights Watch has revealed that Haitian security forces and private contractors have used drones to kill at least 1,243 people and injure 738 since March 2025. Of those killed, 17 were children, and 43 adults not linked to gangs. Among the injured, 49 are believed to be civilians. The most lethal operation caused 57 deaths. HRW highlighted increased drone attacks in Port-au-Prince, with 57 reported between November and January, nearly double the previous months. Researchers analysed videos showing armed drones attacking vehicles and individuals, often without cause. HRW called for urgent action to prevent further loss of innocent lives and urged authorities to ensure transparency and accountability. *—PTI*

Colombia's Petro wins Senate elections

BOGOTA, 10 MARCH

Colombia's President Gustavo Petro's party, the Historical Pact, secured nearly a quarter of Senate seats in Sunday's elections, but must form coalitions to implement reforms, including rewriting the constitution. The Democratic Centre, led by ex-President Álvaro Uribe, gained 17 seats in the 103-member Senate. In the House, the Democratic Centre secured the most votes, though the distribution of seats may favour Petro's party after regional allocation. Traditional parties like the Liberals and Conservatives lost ground, while the Green Party performed poorly. The elections come before a presidential vote in May, with a run-off possible if no one gains 50 per cent. *—PTI*

2 charged with IS style attack near Mamdani's house

NEW YORK, 10 MARCH

Two men, Emir Balat and Ibrahim Kayumi, have been charged with terror offences after attempting to bomb a protest outside New York City's mayor's home, allegedly inspired by IS. The suspects told police they aimed for a larger attack than the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. They tried to detonate two explosives outside Gracie Mansion, where Mayor Zohran Mamdani resides, with a third found in their car. The devices did not explode as planned. Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch said they admitted watching IS propaganda. Balat reportedly said, "If I didn't do it, someone else will come and do it," and hoped the attack would be "even bigger than the Boston Marathon bombing." Both appeared in court, detained until 8 April. *—PTI*

Trump says Iran wanted to take over Middle East

Don says war will end soon, Iran says we will decide when

DUBAI, 10 MARCH

US President Donald Trump claimed that Iran sought to "take over" the Middle East, offering a new rationale for striking Tehran, as strikes continued to across West Asia with no signs of a letup.

"Has operation Midnight Hammer not taken place, that was definite," Trump said. "Because they would've had a nuclear weapon in a matter of weeks."

Operation Midnight Hammer was when the US and Israel bombed Iran's nuclear facilities during the 12-day war between Iran and Israel in June.

Trump also suggested that the war could be short-lived, but a spokesperson for the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Ali Mohammad Naini, said, "Iran will determine when the war ends."

Iran's Parliament Speaker, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, said on X that Iran was "not looking for a ceasefire."

"We believe that the aggressor should be punched in the mouth so that he learns a lesson," he said.

'MOST INTENSE DAY OF STRIKES'

US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said that Tuesday would be the "most intense day of strikes inside Iran" at the Pentagon.

"This is not endless nation-building under the quagmires we saw under Bush or Obama... Those days are dead" he said. "We will not relent until the enemy is defeated. But we do so on our timeline and at our choosing."

Hegseth also added that the strikes at the school in Minab that killed at least 165 people was under investigation. Hegseth added that "terrorists" are using schools to launch missiles.

Gen Dan Caine, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said US forces hit more than 5,000 targets, and that their three objectives included destruction of Iranian ballistic missile and drone capability; hitting Iran's navy to allow movement through the Strait of Hormuz; and hitting "deeper into Iran's military and industrial base."

A man in front of a building destroyed by Israel in Beirut, Lebanon on Tuesday. The building housed a financial institution run by Hezbollah *—PTI*

WEST ASIA WAR DAY-11

STRIKES CONTINUE

Iran launched new attacks on Tuesday at Israel and Gulf Arab countries as it kept up pressure on. In Bahrain, authorities said an Iranian attack hit a residential building in the capital, Manama, killing a 29-year-old woman and wounding eight people. Saudi Arabia said it destroyed two drones over its oil-rich eastern region, and Kuwait's National Guard said it shot down six drones.

In the UAE, firefighters battled a blaze in the industrial city of Ruwais — home to petrochemical plants — after an Iranian drone strike. No injuries were reported.

An airstrike on Iran-backed militias in Iraq killed at least five people, although it wasn't clear who launched the strike.

Lebanon's state-run media reported heavy Israeli fire and airstrikes, including around Beirut, although the extent wasn't immediately clear.

At least 1,230 people have been killed in Iran, at least 397 in Lebanon and 11 in Israel, according to officials.

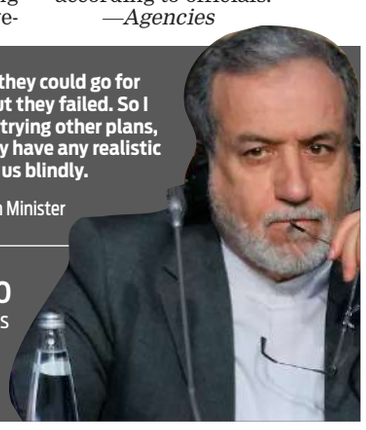
—Agencies

(Democrat leader Chuck Schumer) is now a Palestinian. Officially, he is registered as a Palestinian.

—Donald Trump, US President tries a new slur

They thought that in a matter of two or three days they could go for regime change and achieve a rapid, clean victory, but they failed. So I believe that Plan A was a failure. And now they are trying other plans, but all of them have failed as well. I don't think they have any realistic endgame in mind. They have just started attacking us blindly.

—Abbas Araghchi, Iran Foreign Minister



Trump has 44% approval rating down from 47% last March, according to an NBC poll.

Only 27% approve of the strikes against Iran, according to Reuters/Ipsos

Trump, Putin discuss energy and ceasefire

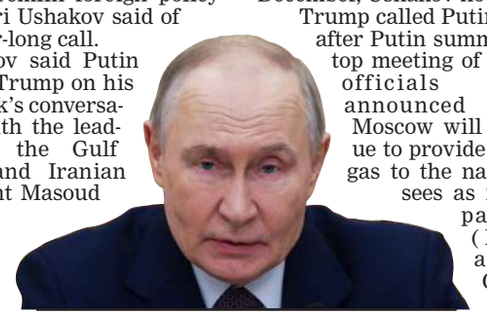
MOSCOW, 10 MARCH

- Russia and Iran have deep strategic and military ties. Putin had congratulated Iran's new Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, and offered his unwavering support for Tehran

US President Donald Trump dialled his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin late on Monday night amid global energy disruption caused by American-Israeli strikes on Iran.

"The conversation focused on the Iran conflict and the trilateral talks between Moscow, Washington and Kyiv aimed at settling the Ukraine conflict. The dialogue between the two Presidents was business-like, open and constructive," Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov said of the hour-long call.

Ushakov said Putin briefed Trump on his last week's conversations with the leaders of the Gulf states and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. This was Putin and Trump's 11th phone conversation and first this year. Last time they had talked in December, Ushakov noted.



Trump called Putin hours after Putin summoned a top meeting of energy officials and announced that Moscow will continue to provide oil and gas to the nations it sees as reliable partners (India and China). *—PTI*

Can help Iran cast off the yoke of tyranny: Bibi

JERUSALEM, 10 MARCH

- Netanyahu said that the Israeli strikes are breaking the bones of the Iranian regime, but the future depends on the people. He said the strikes would continue but didn't give a timeline.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israel can help enable Iranians to "cast off the yoke of tyranny", but any political change in the country would ultimately be up to its people.

Speaking during a visit to the National Health Command Centre on Monday as the conflict entered its 11th day, Netanyahu said Israel's campaign was weakening the Iranian leadership.

"Through the actions taken so far, we are breaking their bones and we are still active," he said.

Netanyahu said that if Israel succeeded together with the Iranian people, it could bring about lasting change. "We will bring about a permanent end to the extent that such things exist in the lives of nations," he said. *—PTI*

IRAN TO ALLOW SHIPS THROUGH HORMUZ IF THEY EXPEL US, ISRAEL ENVOYS

WASHINGTON, 10 MARCH

The Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has offered countries a pass through the Strait of Hormuz if they expelled American and Israeli envoys, according to state media.

The practicality of the offer remains unclear.

The Strait of Hormuz, located between Iran and Oman, connects the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea, and accounts for roughly 20 per cent of the global oil supply passing through it daily.

'DEATH, FIRE AND FURY'

US President Donald Trump warned Iran against attempting to block the Strait of Hormuz.

"If Iran does anything that stops the flow of oil within the Strait of Hormuz, they will be hit twenty times harder than they have been hit so far," Trump posted on Truth Social. "Death, fire, and fury will reign upon them."

He described the move as a "gift" to China. Around 40 per cent of the oil and 30 per cent of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) that China imports passes through the Strait.

However, China has said that it has oil reserves to last up to three-four months.

"I will not allow a terrorist regime to hold the world hostage and attempt to stop the globe's oil supply... The Strait of Hormuz is going to remain safe," Trump told reporters. *—Agencies*

Every 10% increase in oil prices – provided they persist for most of the year – will push up global inflation by 0.4 percentage points and reduce worldwide economic output by 0.2%... Think of the unthinkable and prepare for it

—Kristalina Georgieva, MD of the International Monetary Fund.

Iraq won't be used for attacks: PM to Rubio

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani told US Secretary of State Marco Rubio that his nation must not serve as a conduit for regional hostilities. During a telephonic discussion with Rubio, Sudani emphasised "the importance of ensuring that Iraqi airspace, territory, and waters are not used for any military action targeting neighbouring countries or the region".

US label Afghan as sponsor of wrongful detention

The US State Department on Monday designated Afghanistan as a sponsor of wrongful detention. Afghanistan joins Iran as countries singled out by the US in the past two weeks for their practice of detaining Americans in hopes of extracting policy concessions. Iran was given an identical designation on 27 February, one day before the US and Israel launched strikes against the Islamic Republic.

HISTORICAL SITES DAMAGED IN IRAN

US-Israeli strikes across Iran have damaged a range of historically significant sites, including Tehran's Golestan Palace (top and bottom), a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The palace housed dozens of paintings from the Persian empire that was central to the Mughal way of life. The Chehel Sotoun (left), built in 1647, and also a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Isfahan suffered extensive damage from airstrikes. The Ali Qapu Palace-Museum, another UNESCO site in Isfahan has also been hit. Meanwhile, The White City in Tel Aviv was damaged by Iranian drones.

Aramco warns of 'catastrophe' as profits slip

DUBAI, 10 MARCH

Saudi Arabia's oil giant Aramco reported 2025 profits of $104 billion, down from the year before as the war has seen its fields and facilities targeted. Aramco CEO Amin Nasser warned of "catastrophic consequences" for the global oil markets if the Strait of Hormuz remained shut.

Aramco, the world's largest oil exporter, released its annual results on Tuesday. Formally known as the Saudi Arabian Oil Co, Aramco reported profits of $110 billion in 2024. It said its 2025 revenues were $445 billion, down from $480 billion in 2024.

"While we have faced disruptions in the past, this one by far is the biggest crisis the region's oil and gas industry has faced," Nasser told press. "There would be catastrophic consequences for the world's oil markets and the longer the disruption goes on ... the more drastic the consequences for the global economy."

Nasser said Aramco will reach the capacity of its East-West pipeline "in a couple of days" to get its product out to the global market. The East-West pipeline, built during the Iran-Iraq war, has a daily capacity of 7 million barrels, and allow Saudi to ship oil through the Red Sea or via Egypt, avoiding the chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz. *—Agencies*

CHATGPT KNEW, DID NOTHING

Family sues OpenAI over Canada school shooting that killed 9

VANCOUVER, 10 MARCH

The parents of a girl critically injured in a school shooting in Canada have filed a civil lawsuit against OpenAI, claiming the AI company knew the shooter was planning a mass attack. The lawsuit alleges OpenAI had "specific knowledge of the shooter utilising ChatGPT to plan a mass casualty event like the Tumbler Ridge mass shooting".

OpenAI stated it considered alerting police but did not do so. After Jesse Van Roostselaar killed eight people and then herself last month, OpenAI informed police that her ChatGPT account had been closed, but she had evaded the ban with a second account.

The shooter killed eight people, including her mom ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

The lawsuit claims ChatGPT was used by the shooter as a trusted confidante and collaborator, and it "behaves willingly to assist users such as the shooter".

The legal claim, filed in the British Columbia Supreme Court, states the company's conduct led to Maya Gebala being shot three times, including the head, resulting in permanent disabilities. *—PTI*

RSP eyes majority govt after sweep

KATHMANDU, 10 MARCH

The Rastriya Swatantra Party has won 125 of the 165 seats under direct voting in Nepal's parliamentary polls as vote counting under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system concluded on Tuesday, putting RSP in a position to form a majority government.

However, the counting of votes under the proportional representation (PR) system is still underway and is expected to conclude by Tuesday night, the Election Commission said.

Vote counting for all 165 seats under the direct voting system has been completed, with the RSP emerging as the largest party with 125 seats, it said.

The Nepali Congress (NC) secured 18 seats, followed by the CPN-UML with nine, the Nepali Communist Party (NCP) with eight, the Shram Sanskriti Party (SSP) with three and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) with one seat. One independent candidate was also elected.

Based on the current trend, the RSP is likely to secure at least 50 seats under the PR system, which would take its total tally in the 275-member House of Representatives to around 175 seats, enabling it to form the government under Article 76 (1) of the Nepalese Constitution.

Meanwhile, RSP Chairman Rabi Lamichhane on Tuesday said he looked forward to strengthening Nepal-India ties through "development diplomacy". He thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for wishing him on the party's electoral success. *—PTI*

RSP PM face Balendra Shah ***PHOTO: PTI***

Govt prioritises LPG, CNG, cooking gas supply

Government says uninterrupted gas supply to homes, transport must as 30% supply hit by war

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

LPG production, CNG, and piped cooking gas will take precedence over all other sectors using natural gas as the government rejigged allocation to ensure uninterrupted supply for households and transport sectors.

As the widening West Asia conflict disrupted 30 per cent of India's gas supply, the oil ministry, in a gazette notification, ordered available gas to be diverted from non-priority sectors to key users.

India meets half of its 191 million standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) of gas consumption through imports. With the stalling of tanker movement through the Strait of Hormuz, about 60 mmscmd gas from the Middle East has been disrupted.

The remaining liquefied natural gas (LNG) has been reprioritised to meet 100 per cent of demand of LPG production,

Due to West Asia conflict, delivery of domestic LPG cylinders in Bengaluru now takes up to 25 days after registration —*MOAHMMED ASAD*

CNG, and piped cooking gas (PNG), 80 per cent of commercial users of the fuel and 70 per cent of fertiliser unit needs.

The re-allocation has been done to primarily augment LPG supplies that had been strained after the war in the Middle East disrupted half of the cooking gas supplies.

Liquefied petroleum gas, or LPG, is primarily produced from the processing of natural gas and is also a byproduct of crude oil refining. It is made by separating and purifying propane and butane gases, which are then pressurised into a liquid state for easy transport and storage in steel cylinders typically seen in homes and restaurants for cooking.

According to the gazette notification issued late on Monday, the latest order issued under Essential Commodities Act of 1955 will override all outstanding contracts and other commercial arrangements for sale of LNG.

Until now, compressed natural gas (CNG) and piped cooking gas were the two priority sectors to receive domestic natural gas as their raw material. Under the revised allocation, requirements of LPG, CNG, and piped gas manufacturers will be fully met first before natural gas is supplied to other sectors. —*PTI*

WORLD MARKETS

DOW (US): 48,007.25 **(0.51%)**

S&P 500 (US): 6,842.18 **(0.37%)**

Nasdaq (US): 22,848.83 **(0.66%)**

Nikkei (Japan): 54,248.39 **(2.88%)**

Hang Seng (China): 25,959.90 **(2.17%)**

DAX (Germany): 23,936.56 **(2.25%)**

FTSE 100 (UK): 10,409.53 **(1.56%)**

CAC 40 (Paris): 8,057.36 **(1.79%)**

KOSPI (South Korea): 5,532.59 **(5.35%)**

SENSEX AND NIFTY END NEARLY 1% HIGHER AS CRUDE PRICES DROP

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended nearly 1 per cent higher on Tuesday after two days of massive decline, following a drop in crude oil prices and recovery in global peers amid indications that the West Asia crisis could end soon.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 639.82 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at 78,205.98. During the day, it surged 960.09 points or 1.23 per cent to 78,526.25.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 233.55 points or 0.97 per cent to end at 24,261.60.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, tumbled 9.03 per cent to USD 90.26 per barrel.

From the 30-Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, InterGlobe Aviation, Maruti, ICICI Bank, Asian Paints and UltraTech Cement were among the major gainers.

Eternal, Infosys, Reliance Industries and Bharti Airtel were among the laggards.

The BSE smallcap select index jumped 1.91 per cent, and the midcap select index climbed 1.71 per cent.

On Monday, the Sensex tanked 1,352.74 points or 1.71 per cent to settle at 77,566.16, registering its second day of decline. —*PTI*

'LOOKING TO HELP EXPORTERS TO DEAL GLOBAL CRISIS'

Commerce and Industry Minister **Piyush Goyal** said the government is looking to support exporters with insurance amid the ongoing West Asia crisis. "Similarly, we are looking for developing some new schemes like insurance support... We are consulting ECGC and other departments on that," he told reporters. An inter-ministerial group monitors developments daily. Exporters face challenges after a joint US-Israel attack on Iran, affecting freight, air transport and insurance. Goyal highlighted India's export potential, noting nine FTAs and talks with Canada and six GCC nations. India remains the seventh-largest global exporter, with agriculture and fish exports around Rs 5 lakh crore. —*PTI*

West Asia cargo get 15-day fee waiver

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

Container terminal operators at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) will grant a 100 per cent waiver on ground rent or dwell time charges for West Asia-bound containers stranded at the port for up to 15 days amid disruptions caused by the ongoing conflict in the region.

JNPA said operators will also waive 80 per cent of reefer plug-in charges for the same period for containers carrying perishable goods.

The relief applies from 12am on 28 February to midnight on 14 March for containers already inside terminals on 28 February or gated in till 7am on 8 March.

The port's five terminals run by operators such as DP World, PSA International, APM Terminals and JM Baxi, will implement the measures.

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Shipping has advised shipping lines, vessel operators and agents to avoid predatory or non-transparent pricing during the crisis.

The regulator asked companies to clearly disclose charges and avoid opportunistic levies that raise logistics costs.—*PTI*

After all-time high, crude tanks 8% to Rs 8,069/barrel

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

- ASimilarly, the April contract on the MCX slumped by Rs 531, or 6.21 per cent, to Rs 8,017 per barrel in 6,359 lots. On Monday, the March contract had surged more than 26 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 10,549 per barrel. However, prices later pared gains sharply and closed nearly 17 per cent lower at Rs 8,788 per barrel, down by Rs 1,761 from the peak level.

Crude oil prices slumped over 8 per cent to Rs 8,069 per barrel in futures trade on Tuesday following comments from US President Donald Trump that the conflict with Iran may be nearing its end, easing fears of prolonged supply disruptions.

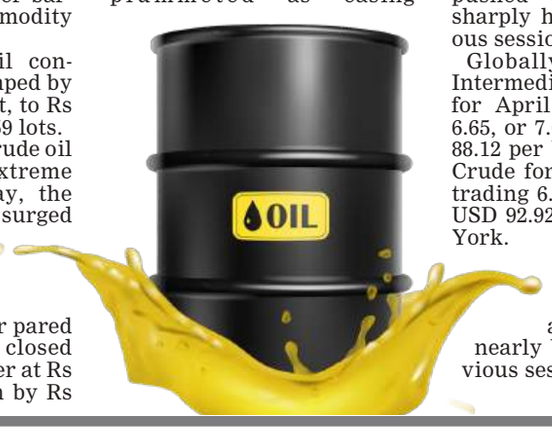
Ending its three-day rally, crude oil for March delivery depreciated by Rs 719, or 8.18 per cent, to Rs 8,069 per barrel on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

Similarly, the April contract on the MCX slumped by Rs 531, or 6.21 per cent, to Rs 8,017 per barrel in 6,359 lots.

The fall came after crude oil prices witnessed extreme volatility. On Monday, the March contract had surged more than 26 per cent to hit a record high of Rs 10,549 per barrel.

However, prices later pared gains sharply and closed nearly 17 per cent lower at Rs 8,788 per barrel, down by Rs 1,761 from the peak level.

Analysts said the oil prices plummeted as easing geopolitical tensions reduced the risk premium that had pushed the energy rates sharply higher in the previous session.



Globally, West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil for April delivery fell USD 6.65, or 7.02 per cent, to USD 88.12 per barrel, while Brent Crude for May contract was trading 6.1 per cent lower at USD 92.92 per barrel in New York.

WTI crude futures fell below USD 90 per barrel after surging to nearly USD 120 in the previous session. —*PTI*

Govt eases FDI norms for China, Pak

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The government on Tuesday eased norms for foreign direct investment from all countries, including China, that share land borders with India, sources said.

They said press note 3 of 2020 has been amended in this regard.

The decision was taken in a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

However, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw did not make any announcements in this regard during the media briefing on cabinet decisions.

The department for promotion of industry and internal trade (DPIIT) said that "no such announcement has been made by the Cabinet today".

DPIIT is an arm of the commerce and industry ministry which deals with issues related to FDI.

Under the press note 3, foreign companies having shareholders from countries sharing land borders with In-dia are required to obtain mandatory government approval for investments in any sector.

Cabinet clears amendments to insolvency, companies laws

The Union Cabinet approved amendments to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and Companies Act, according to sources. Specific details are yet to be disclosed. Sources confirmed changes to the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and Companies Act, 2013, both administered by the corporate affairs ministry. In August 2025, a Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha proposing provisions to reduce the time for admission of insolvency resolution applications, later reviewed by a select committee that submitted its report in December 2025. Last month, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the IBC (Amendment) Bill, 2025 would be introduced in the second half of the Budget session. —*PTI*

Countries that share land borders with India are China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, and Afghanistan.

China stands at the 23rd position with only 0.32 per cent share ($2.51 billion) in the total FDI equity in-flow reported in India from April 2000 to December 2025. China has emerged as the second-largest trading partner of India.

In 2024-25, India's exports to China contracted 14.5 per cent to $14.25 billion as against $16.66 bil-lion in 2023-24. The trade deficit was widened to $99.2 billion in 2024-25 from $85 billion in 2023-24. During April-January 2025-26, India's exports to China rose 38.37 per cent to $15.88 billion, while im-ports rose 13.82 per cent to $108.18 billion. The trade deficit stood at $92.3 billion. —*PTI*

SILVER NEARS RS 2.7 LAKH/KG; GOLD CLIMBS TO RS 1.64L/10G

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Silver prices surged by Rs 10,975 to Rs 2.79 lakh per kilogram in the national capital on Tuesday, while gold rose Rs 400, tracking strong global trends as a weak US dollar boosted demand for the safe-haven asset.

Ending its three-day losing streak, silver soared by Rs 10,975, or 4.09 per cent, to Rs 2,79,275 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) from Monday's closing level of Rs 2,68,300 per kg, as per the All India Sarafa Association.

Gold prices also moved higher, with the metal having 99.9 per cent purity rising by Rs 400, or 0.24 per cent, to Rs 1,64,700 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). Gold settled at Rs 1,64,300 per 10g in the previous session.

In the international markets, spot silver gained USD 1.38, or 1.6 per cent, to USD 88.33 per ounce, while gold was trading nearly 1 per cent higher at USD 5,172.86 per ounce. —*PTI*

Equity MF inflow rises by 8% in Feb

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Equity mutual funds attracted net inflows of Rs 25,978 crore in February, an 8 per cent rise from the previous month.

This was amid optimism around the India–US trade deal, according to data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) on Tuesday.

The inflows pushed the industry's assets under management (AUM) to Rs 82 lakh crore in February from Rs 81 lakh crore in January.

Data showed equity inflows rose from Rs 24,028 crore in January to Rs 25,978 crore in February.

Among equity schemes, flexi-cap funds attracted the highest inflows at Rs 6,924.65 crore, followed by mid-cap funds at Rs 4,003 crore and small-cap funds at Rs 3,881 crore.

Sectoral and thematic funds saw inflows of Rs 2,987 crore, while large-cap funds added Rs 2,112 crore.

However, equity-linked savings schemes (ELSS) recorded an outflow of Rs 650 crore.

Overall, the mutual fund industry logged net inflows of Rs 94,530 crore in February, lower than Rs 1.56 lakh crore in January.

Gold exchange-traded funds saw inflows of Rs 5,255 crore, while debt mutual funds recorded net inflows of Rs 42,106 crore during the month. —*PTI*

IDFC Bank settles Chandigarh fraud claims at ₹645 crore

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

IDFC First Bank on Tuesday said it has settled fraud-related claims worth Rs 645 crore linked to a Chandigarh branch and has found no further discrepancies in the accounts.

The private sector lender had last month disclosed a Rs 590 crore fraud involving certain employees and others at the branch in connection with a specific set of Haryana government accounts.

In a regulatory filing, the bank said that against the initial principal estimate of Rs 590 crore, it received claims totalling Rs 645 crore and has paid the net principal amount, Rs 55 crore higher than the original estimate.

The bank clarified that the claims relate to the same incident and branch, and not to any new fraud. It added that there are no other pending claims and it will continue to pursue legal action against the perpetrators to recover the dues. IDFC First Bank said it has completed reconciliation of all relevant accounts and found no further irregularities. —*PTI*

XED delays GIFT City 1st IPO amid global tensions

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH
Executive learning solutions provider XED Executive Development has postponed its USD 12 million Initial Public Offering (IPO) to 16 March from the earlier 6 March amid geopolitical uncertainties in West Asia involving the US, Israel and Iran. This marks the first share sale at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, India's IFSC, under the International Financial Services Centres Authority framework. The IPO, priced at USD 10-10.5 per share, will close on 24 March. "Given the prevailing geopolitical uncertainties in the Gulf region, XED has rescheduled its IPO," the company said. Shares will list on NSE International Exchange and India International Exchange at GIFT City. —*PTI*

ROSE BY ABOUT 2%

India's Feb power demand hits 15-year high due to heat: Crisil

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

India's power demand rose by about 2 per cent in February to 133 billion units (BUs), up from 131 BUs in the same month last year, marking the highest February consumption since at least 2010, according to a Crisil Intelligence report. The surge is attributed to above-normal minimum and maximum temperatures in several regions, increasing cooling requirements.

"In fiscal 2026, we estimate power demand to increase 1-1.5 per cent on-year to 1,705-1,715 BU, owing to a harsh winter, onset of above-normal temperatures towards the end of the fiscal and steady economic growth, partially offset by a prolonged monsoon," the report said. Industrial activity contributed, with the Manufacturing PMI rising to 56.9 from 55.4. Peak power demand reached 244 GW, slightly above the June summer peak.

Coal-based generation declined marginally, while renewable, hydro and nuclear output grew. "Coal remains the primary fuel for electricity generation in India," the report noted, with thermal plants holding 59 million tonnes of coal stock, the highest since July 2025. —*ANI*

Deloitte India unveils its 1st cybersecurity hub in B'luru

BENGALURU, 10 MARCH

Consulting major Deloitte India on Tuesday announced the launch of 'ConnectSafe' in Bengaluru, which it claims is the country's first-of-its-kind cybersecurity facility aimed at safeguarding critical infrastructure and connected ecosystems.

The 4,500-square-foot facility will simulate real-world cyber-threat scenarios across various industries, including automotive, medical technology (MedTech), and consumer ecosystems.

The initiative marks a shift from traditional data-only protection to securing operational technology (OT) and human lives, addressing vulnerabilities in hyper-connected systems, the company said in a statement.

"As industries become increasingly connected, from smart factories and power systems to vehicles and medical devices, cyber threats are no longer limited to IT systems, they directly impact the operational backbone of our economy," said Romal Shetty, CEO, Deloitte South Asia. Shetty added that the facility will help enterprises build trust and resilience while positioning India as a leader in next-generation cyber defence. —*PTI*

Rupee rebounds to 91.85 from record low against USD

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

The rupee staged a strong recovery from its record low against the US dollar on Tuesday, gaining 36 paise to settle at 91.85 (provisional), aided by a sharp fall in global crude oil prices over hopes of de-escalation of the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 91.92 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 91.71-92.19 before settling at 91.85 (provisional), up 36 paise from its previous close.

The rupee crashed to its all-time closing low of 92.21 against the US dollar on Monday, down 39 paise, as global crude oil prices saw a sharp spike, and the greenback strengthened.

Meanwhile was trading 0.52 per cent lower at 98.65. —*PTI*

BCCI to announce first 20 days of IPL schedule soon

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said the schedule for the first 20 days of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 will be announced within the next two to three days after reviewing election dates in some states. The season will officially begin on 28 March, broadcaster Star Sports confirmed. The schedule announcement will be in two phases, as state assembly elections are scheduled in Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Royal Challengers Bengaluru, defending champions, will host five home games at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, including the IPL final, while two matches will be at Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Stadium, Raipur. The iconic Bengaluru venue had been suspended since June 2025 following a fatal stampede during RCB's 2025 celebrations. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gujarat Titans appoints Matthew Hayden as coach

AHMEDABAD, 10 MARCH

Former Australian opener Matthew Hayden has been named as the batting coach of Gujarat Titans for the upcoming IPL season, the franchise announced on Tuesday. A two-time ODI World Cup winner and one of the most dominant opening batters of his era, Hayden joins the Titans set-up with an illustrious international career and expertise in modern-day T20 batting dynamics. Hayden represented Australia in 273 international matches across formats, scoring over 15,000 international runs and playing a pivotal role in multiple ICC tournament victories. Commenting on the appointment, Hayden said: "Good batting applies pressure. Great batting owns the game. That's the standard we want to set at Gujarat Titans." *—PTI*

Paralympian gets life ban for sexually abuse

DENVER, 10 MARCH

The US Centre for SafeSport has permanently banned a Paralympic swimmer who was accused of sexually assaulting an autistic teammate at the Games in 2021 and for about a year after that. The centre on Monday handed down the suspension to Robert Griswold, whose case led to a 2022 lawsuit that was eventually dismissed when a judge ruled the court lacked jurisdiction. The lawsuit spelled out a pattern of grooming and sexual assault that began when Griswold and the swimmer traveled to Tokyo for the Paralympics in 2021. It accused US Olympic and Paralympic Committee & the SafeSport center for "shielding and protecting" Griswold while he committed the acts. *—PTI*

New Delhi to host World Para Athletics meet

NEW DELHI, 9 MARCH

India will once again take centre stage in global para sport as the second edition of the New Delhi World Para Athletics Grand Prix takes place from March 11 to 13, bringing together around 257 athletes from eight nations for a high-profile international competition in the national capital. The event will feature athletes from India, Russia, Nepal, Bhutan, Hong Kong, Serbia, Bosnia, and Egypt, highlighting the growing international presence of para athletics in India. Team India will field the largest contingent, with approximately 219 athletes, competing across multiple track-and-field events and sport classifications, as per a press release. Devendra Jhajharia, President of the Paralympic Committee of India said the event highlights the growing global stature of para-athletics in India. *—ANI*

BCCI rewards T20 winners record Rs 131 crore

SKY eyes Olympic gold, says honour to join 'Dhoni, Rohit'

MUMBAI, 10 MARCH

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Tuesday announced a cash reward of Rs 131 crore for the Indian squad following its third ICC Men's T20 World Cup triumph.

This is the largest cash prize in the history of Indian cricket. The reward will be shared among the 15 players, coaching staff and other support personnel. Sources said the players will receive the lion's share, with the remaining amount distributed among support staff based on hierarchy.

According to sources, each of the 15 players is expected to receive Rs 6 crore, while the remaining Rs 41 crore will be shared among the support staff. The reward is Rs 6 crore higher than the Rs 125 crore announced for the team led by Rohit Sharma after the 2024 title win. "The Board congratulates the players, support staff and selectors once again on this historic achievement and wishes them continued success in the future," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in a statement.

India's captain Suryakumar Yadav after arriving at his residence following India's victory in the ICC Men's T20 WC 2026, in Mumbai, on Tuesday *—PTI*

India secured the trophy after defeating the New Zealand national cricket team by 96 runs in the final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Sunday. The win helped India successfully defend the title and become the first team to retain the tournament as well as the first to win the T20 World Cup three times.

Captain Suryakumar Yadav said the team's next target is an Olympic gold medal in 2028. Speaking after returning to his residence in Mumbai's Deonar area, he said India hopes to build on its current momentum.

"We have the momentum. Our target now is to win the 2028 Olympics gold medal," he said, adding that another T20 World Cup scheduled the same year could complete a hat-trick of titles. Yadav also said it was a "special feeling" to join the elite company of captains such as MS Dhoni, Rohit Sharma and Kapil Dev who have led India to major ICC titles. *—PTI*

The two teams that played their final games in Kolkata have not been able to fly out due to West Asia disruption *—X/ICC*

ICC books flights for WI, SA players stuck in India

KOLKATA, 10 MAR

The ICC on Tuesday booked separate commercial flights for the stranded West Indies and South Africa teams after their charter flight scheduled to take off from Kolkata "was cancelled due to logistical issues".

"All the West Indies and South African players have been booked on individual commercial airline flights. ICC chairman Jay Shah has personally spoken and assured players of a safe journey back home," an ICC source privy to the development told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The two teams that played their final games in Kolkata (West Indies in Super 8s on March 1 and South Africa on March 4 in semi-final) have not been able to fly out due to the disruption that has been caused by International airspace restrictions across parts of West Asia following American and Israeli strikes on Iran.

The restrictions have severely complicated outbound travel from India towards the Caribbean and Africa, forcing cricket authorities to explore alternative routes and charter arrangements.

ICC's airline partner Emirates has been unable to operate due to shutdown of Dubai airspace.

The West Indies squad has been stranded in Kolkata since 1 March after being knocked out of the T20 World Cup by India, who defeated them by five wickets in their Super Eight match at Eden Gardens on 1 March.

South Africa's campaign had ended a few days later when they lost the first semifinal to eventual runners-up New Zealand at the same venue on 4 March, leaving them caught in the same boat. *—PTI*

ARSHDEEP DOCKED 15% MATCH FEE FOR HITTING DARYL

DUBAI, 10 MARCH

Arshdeep Singh has been fined 15 per cent of his match fee for throwing the ball "aggressively and inappropriately" at **Daryl Mitchell** during the final of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Ahmedabad.

The incident occurred in the 11th over of New Zealand national cricket team's innings when the India pacer fielded the ball on his follow-through and hurled it towards Mitchell, striking the batter's pads.

According to a media release from the International Cricket Council, Arshdeep breached Article 2.9 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to throwing a ball or any item of cricket equipment at or near a player in an inappropriate or dangerous manner during an international match.

In addition to the fine, one demerit point has been added to his disciplinary record.

It is his first offence within a 24-month period.

The charge was levelled by on-field umpires Richard Illingworth and Alex Wharf, along with third umpire Allahuddien Paleker and fourth umpire Adrian Holdstock *—PTI*

Hero Indian Open set to offer record prize purse

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

The 2026 Hero Indian Open, to be held in Gurugram from 26 to 29 March, will feature a world-class field led by PGA Tour star Akshay Bhatia and a record prize purse.

Sanctioned by the DP World Tour and Indian Golf Union (IGU), the tournament's prize purse has been increased to a record USD 2.55 million, up from USD USD 2.25 million on offer a year ago.

The star-studded field will include the 24-year-old Indian-American Bhatia, who has risen to new heights by winning the iconic Arnold Palmer Invitational 2026 at Bay Hill, Orlando, USA. Bhatia, who is Hero MotoCorp's Global Brand Ambassador, will make his first trip to India with this tour.

Another Hero MotoCorp Brand Ambassador, Rayhan Thomas, who has been on the Korn Ferry Tour for last two years, is also confirmed for the field. The field will also include Italy's Francesco Molinari, who is also a three-time PGA Tour winner. Molinari became the first player from Italy to win a Major Championship when he triumphed at the 147th Open Championship in 2018.

- The star-studded field will include the 24-year-old Indian-American Bhatia, who has risen to new heights by winning iconic Arnold Palmer Invitational 2026 at Bay Hill, Orlando, USA

Brijinder Singh, President, Indian Golf Union, said, "The Hero Indian Open remains the crown jewel in the calendar of the Indian Golf Union. This year's tournament promises to be bigger than ever as we welcome a stellar field of leading international players along with India's finest professionals." *—PTI*

Manu tops 10m pistol event in national trials finals

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Olympian Manu Bhaker topped the finals of women's 10m pistol event in the national selection trials T3 (Group A) which concluded here on Tuesday.

Trial two winner Sainyam finished second while Esha Singh secured the third spot in the eight-woman final.

Manu, who squeezed into the finals as the last qualifier, maintained her lead from the end of the second series to finish on top with a total score of 246.1, which was a comfortable 4.2 points more than World Cup Final silver medallist Sainyam who finished with 241.9.

Asian Championship gold and World Championship bronze medallist Esha finished third with a score of 220.6.

Asian Games champion Palak Gulia finished fourth after a score of 200.2 followed by Anjali Choudhary, who hit 179.8.

The national squad will now start another coaching camp here from Wednesday. *—PTI*

Lakshya disheartened after Eng Championships defeat

NEW DELHI, 10 MARCH

Lakshya Sen admitted he felt "a little bit disheartened" after finishing runner-up in the All England Open Badminton for the second time but said the focus now is on recovery and upcoming major events.

The 24-year-old Indian shuttler lost the final to Chinese Taipei's Lin Chun-yi after an intense week in Birmingham that saw him spend more than five hours on court, including a gruelling semi-final in which he battled severe cramps.

"It's been a good but emotional week. Reaching the final again and not winning feels disheartening, but overall it was a good run with some important wins," Lakshya said.

He acknowledged that the physical demands of modern men's singles are forcing him to rethink preparation and recovery. "I'm not 20 anymore to recover as fast. I'm not saying I'm old, but you have to be more conscious about recovery and diet," he said.

Lakshya also pointed to shoulder injuries in recent years and said managing workload has become crucial with an increasingly demanding tournament calendar. He has begun placing greater emphasis on recovery between events to stay injury free.

The former finalist said he would analyse the All England campaign with his team before shifting focus to the Badminton Asia Championships and the BWF World Championships later this year.

Lakshya also credited mental trainer Mon Brockman for helping him approach big tournaments with greater clarity.

Reflecting on the past year, he said injuries and the emotional aftermath of the Paris 2024 Olympics affected his consistency before he regained form by winning the Australian Open (badminton) last year. *—PTI*

India bows out of AFC Asian Cup with 1-3 defeat to Taipei

SYDNEY, 10 MARCH

AFC Women's Asian Cup: Wasteful India crash out after 1–3 defeat to Chinese Taipei women's national football team

India women's national football team bowed out of the AFC Women's Asian Cup after suffering a 1–3 defeat to Chinese Taipei in a must-win Group match in Sydney on Tuesday, paying heavily for poor finishing despite dominating long spells.

India created several opportunities but failed to convert in the final third, resulting in an early exit despite qualifying for the prestigious tournament on merit for the first time.

- India women's national football team bowed out of the AFC Women's Asian Cup after suffering a 1–3 defeat to Chinese Taipei in a must-win Group match in Sydney on Tuesday

Chinese Taipei took the lead in the 12th minute when Y H Su tapped the ball into an empty net after a poor back pass from Sanju to J W Chen. Indian goalkeeper Elangbam Panthoi Chanu had rushed off her line in an attempt to stop Chen, who squared the ball for Su to score.

India equalised in the 39th minute through Manisha Kalyan, whose powerful strike from around 30 yards found the net.

However, Chinese Taipei regained the lead in first-half stoppage time. After Pyari Xaxa handled the ball inside the box, the resulting penalty from Y. Y. Hsu hit the post and rebounded off Panthoi into the goal.

The result was sealed in the 77th minute when Yu-Chin Chen beat Panthoi after a run down the right flank to score the third.India had earlier lost to Vietnam women's national football team and Japan women's national football team.

To progress, the Blue Tigresses needed to beat Chinese Taipei by at least two goals while hoping Japan defeated Vietnam, which they did 4–0. *—PTI*

Alcaraz continues winning streak at Indian Wells

CALIFORNIA, 10 MARCH

Spanish tennis star Carlos Alcaraz maintained his dominant form at the Indian Wells Open, securing a hard-fought victory over Arthur Rinderknech on Monday. Alcaraz triumphed 6-7(6), 6-3, 6-2, extending his undefeated season record to 14 wins, including his Australian Open triumph. "He was playing his best tennis, I would say, in the first, the beginning of the second. For me, it was really, really difficult," Alcaraz said. "I got in trouble, to be honest, but just really happy with the way I dealt with everything that was happening. I accepted it, kept going, stayed strong mentally and then tried to do a little bit differently... I think I just started to play more solid, waiting for my chances."

Meanwhile, Novak Djokovic advanced to the fourth round, beating Aleksandar Kovacevic 6-4, 1-6, 6-4. Djokovic, a five-time champion, faced a setback in the second set but ultimately prevailed, saying, "It was a great performance from Aleks. We know each other. We speak the same language. His whole family is Serbian."

Djokovic will now face champion Draper, who defeated Cerundolo. Djokovic added, "Winning ugly, right? That is what counts. I am glad to be able to overcome the challenge today." *—ANI*

AMID WEST ASIA WAR

World Cup is too big to be postponed amid global turmoil, says FIFA

DALLAS, 10 MARCH

FIFA's World Cup chief operating officer Heimo Schirgi said the tournament is "too big" to be postponed despite global tensions arising from the conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran.

Speaking in Dallas on Monday at the International Broadcast Center for the expanded 48-team FIFA World Cup 2026, Schirgi said the governing body is closely monitoring developments but expects the tournament to proceed as planned. The event is scheduled to begin on June 11."If I had a crystal ball I could tell you what will happen, but the situation is changing day by day. We are monitoring closely with our federal and international partners and will take it step by step. The World Cup will go on," he said.

The tournament will be played across 11 venues in the United States, three in Mexico and two in Canada. Despite a travel ban imposed by the Trump administration on some countries, including Iran, Ivory Coast, Haiti and Senegal, exceptions will be made for players, team officials and close relatives.

Schirgi said FIFA remains in regular contact with Iran's football federation. Officials were in Dallas to announce plans for a 34-day fan festival and inspect construction of the broadcast hub near AT&T Stadium, where nine matches will be played. On criticism over ticket prices, which have reached USD 8,680 for top-tier seats, Schirgi said a 48-hour additional sales window was introduced to allow fans who missed out in one category to buy tickets in another. *—PTI*